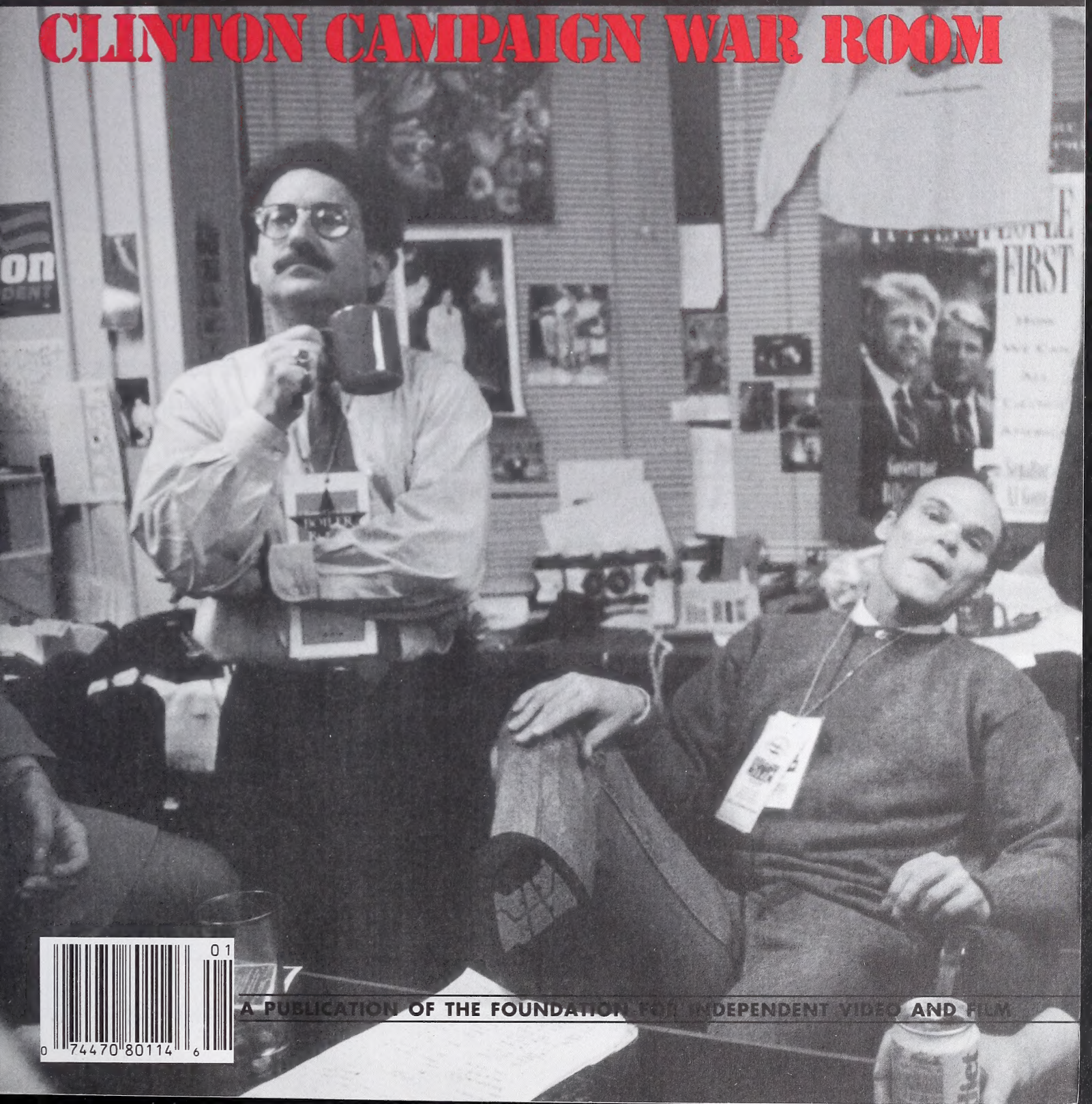
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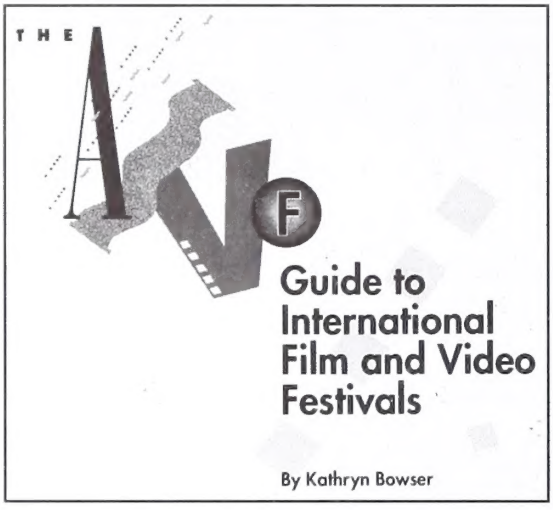
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Also featured in this issue: Greenpeace video coordinator Karen Hirsh offers a half-dozen case studies of environmental films and videos that have made a tangible difference for the environment.

Cover photo: © 1992 David Burnett, courtesy Contact Press Images

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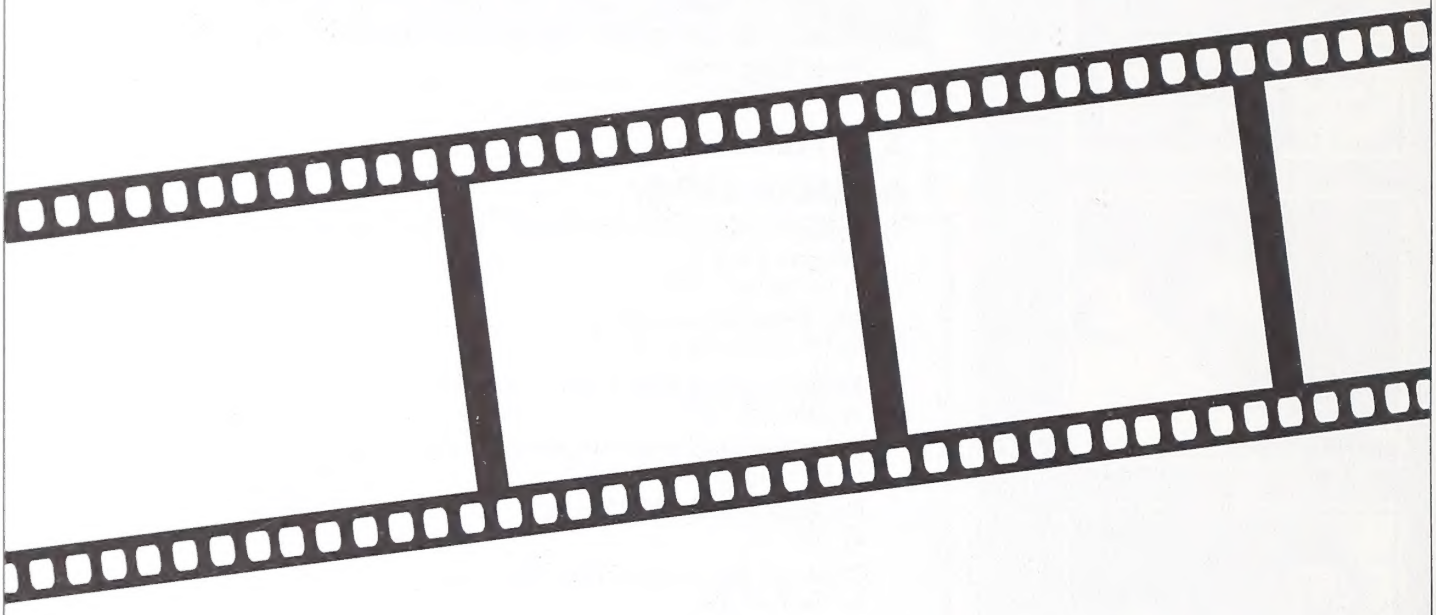
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LETTERS

WHO'S WINNING THE CULTURE WAR?

To the editor:

A friend just sent me your issue analyzing the attack on PBS ["Uncivil Wars: The Conservative Assault on Public Broadcasting," by Josh Daniel, August/September 1992]. I say "analyzing" to be as fair as possible, although the tone is that of an exposé—tearing the mask from the face of the enemy. What mask? What enemy?

You labor to establish that the critics of PBS who assert that PBS programming is bent to the left are *known conservatives* and reveal that some, like David Horowitz, are ex-leftist radicals who either saw the light or sold out. What else is new? The entire issue breathes an attitude I find fascinating—that conservatives are not just wrong, but *wicked*; that political conservatism is, at bottom, a sort of criminal conspiracy—the world according to Oliver Stone.

I find it fascinating because I am pretty old, old enough to have voted for Roosevelt, participated in Henry Wallace's campaign, and predicted (on a little FM station in Pennsylvania) that Truman would beat Dewey; so old that I can remember when Republicans were as angry, paranoid, and given to belief in mad conspiracies as your side seems now to be.

Mass communication was then in its infancy, of course—so Republican versions of Olive Stone and Bill Moyers never had the opportunity to unhinge vast audiences, although, remembering Joe McCarthy, I think it was good they did not.

But you have devoted many, many words to attacking people who decry the tax-supported bias of PBS and, along with PBS officials, insist there ain't no such bias.

I suggest that the matter is not difficult to resolve if anyone really wants to resolve it. The last 10 years have given us a whole series of social and political issues over which the public has split. It should not be too difficult to list those issues and define the positions taken by the opponents in public debate. Then we could check what PBS has offered on these issues. How much time devoted to each side? I can remember any number of sympathetic documentaries supporting various Marxist groups in Central and South America, but if there was roughly equivalent support for the contras, I missed it. I can recall many tender evocations of sympathy for the Palestinians, usually in documentaries that featured Israeli leftists or members of the Peace Now dovecote. But none supporting the "intransigent, hard-line" views of the other side.

Am I forgetful? Is there someone as ubiquitous as Moyers flogging the slogans and accusations of the right as assiduously as he does those of the left? Forgive me, but I can't take seriously the view that William Buckley's once-a-week, lofty, remote excursions into religion, philosophy, and the Canadian Way are equivalent to Moyers' regular and repeated revelations of Republican treason. Please—a little proportion.

What puzzles me most about the whole debate is why in the world you folks—having won the pop culture battle hands down, with a lock on the documentary business, and all of Hollywood in your corner—why don't you just rejoice? When I was young, I used to think conservatives were the worst losers ever. What I can't understand is why your side, victorious so far in the culture war, is such a bad *winner*?

Saul David
Van Nuys, California

Josh Daniel responds:

It appears from Saul David's letter that he has not been watching much public television over the past 10 years. He comments that if PBS aired any shows favoring conservative causes, then he missed them. Well, Mr. David, yes, you did. Over the past 10 years PBS aired programs like *Nicaragua Was Our Home* (the pro-contra film produced by Rev. Sung Myung Moon's CAUSA) and *Television's Vietnam: The Real Story*, produced by Accuracy in Media. Mr. David also turns a blind eye to the weekly hours of conservative public affairs programming over the last decade, hosted by William Buckley, John McLaughlin, and Morton Kondracke. These shows generally supported the contras and U.S. policy in El Salvador. Mr. David asks "if there's someone as ubiquitous as Moyers flogging the slogans and accusations of the right as assiduously as he does those of the left?" If he would watch William Buckley's *Firing Line*, John McLaughlin's *One on One* and the *McLaughlin Group*, and Morton Kondracke's *American Interests*, the answer would be self evident. In addition, Mr. David discounts the impact of a host like Buckley, seen on national television week after week, whom many credit with launching the "conservative revolution" over the last 30 years.

If right-wing critics object to what they deem to be a left-wing bias in documentaries, I have a proposition. Lobby for true diversity on the public airwaves. Let's have several weekly public affairs series offering a progressive agenda to counter the ongoing conservative monopoly. Let's have *more* documentaries that express all points of view. Let's have a PBS that truly challenges and informs.

PBS' INORGANIC DIET

To the editor:

The interview with Jennifer Lawson ["PBS's Jennifer Lawson on Public TV's Programming Priorites and the Role of Independents," November 1992] was forthright and open, a welcome addition to the dialogue around public television. In the same spirit I would like to point out that there are many of us out here who *do* watch television and have worked for years (decades!) to expand the form and content of TV in the U.S. There are many independents who do not work solely with individual shows, who have been engaged for many years in series for public access and for exhibition at media centers. Many of us would like to see PBS use the experiences of these other venues to take more chances in pushing the boundaries of what television means.

I do not know of anyone who advocates that PBS turn into public access with a big budget, as Lawson describes. I do, however, think that the experiences and programmers at media centers and access channels can be useful laboratories for series concepts. Curators at media centers and other venues have evolved extremely imaginative and dynamic ways of pairing programs:

- Numerous curators have pioneered women's programming. There's Chris Hill's *Feeling the Faults* series for Hallwalls in Buffalo; Nancy Bless's *The Invention of Childhood* for the Kohler Art Center; Mickey McGee's *The Body Politic* for Artists Space; Cara Mertes' series on women and housework, *Dirt and Domesticity*, for the Whitney Equitable Center, and Janet Sternburg's Learning Channel series *Through Her Eyes*. All are evidence of the depth and diversity of women's work. When was there any women's series on PBS?
- Ada Griffin and Steve Gallagher put on a terrific series at The Kitchen in New York City called *D'Ghetto Eyes*, which looks at assimilation, alienation, and intracultural conflicts.
- Craig Baldwin has a weekly series, *The Other Cinema*, at the media arts center Artists Television Access in San Francisco that combines tapes of performance art with archival films and documentaries in bizarre and fascinating combinations.
- For years Asian CineVision in New York has programmed what is perhaps the country's most successful film festival showcasing a specific ethnic community. Their annual children's series is second to none.

There are hundreds of other examples. The expertise of these skilled programmers has been completely neglected by PBS, although many local stations have broadcast or cablecast their series.

Why can't PBS work in collaboration with media centers, access, and independents? There have been projects at individual PBS stations over the years that have tried to expand traditional formats and organizational models. I recall the Open Studio that Daniel Del Solar, Skip Blumberg, and Loni Ding (and many others) produced for KQED, for which public television, independents, and community members pooled resources to produce programming that was responsive to public needs and creative energies. I think that there are ways that the Independent Television Service could strengthen the independent media infrastructure in this country, and at the same time fund a variety of experimental programming combinations.

It would seem cost effective and sensible to try some programming experimentation that grows organically out of those independents who have been hoeing the raster rows of TV already. Rather than the thousand flowers metaphors, how about an image of organic gardening? If public television is to thrive and maintain creative vigor, it must turn over the dead soil of the industrial TV wasteland and build a healthy earth that can sustain the alternative media community, which nurtures the seeds for visionary, multicultural, and ecological television in the twenty-first century.

DeeDee Halleck
Willow, New York

RADICE'S LAST STAND

NEA Honcho Vetoes Three Grants to Gay/Lesbian Fests

Just after the Presidential election last November, Anne-Imelda Radice, acting chair of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), turned down grants recommended for funding from the Media Arts Fund (MAF), a regranting program funded by the NEA and administered by the National Alliance for Media Arts Centers (NAMAC). The three vetoed grants, totalling $17,500, were all for gay and lesbian film festivals: the New Festival (New York), Gay and Lesbian Media Coalition (Los Angeles), and the Pittsburgh Lesbian and Gay International Film Festival.

Of the 53 proposals recommended by NAMAC, the three queer film festivals were the only ones rejected by the NEA.

Julian Low, director of NAMAC, says, "Ms. Radice's decision to withhold funds recommended by peer panels is an act of discrimination based on political concerns. She has been sitting on the decision since last spring and is only making it official now that the election is over." NAMAC has offered the festivals temporary loans that come from its general funds, which are composed of membership dues, to replace the vetoed grants.

MAF, initiated in 1991, has a mandate to support culturally diverse, small, and emerging organizations and programs. Of 167 proposals in this round, the queer film festivals were among 53 recommended for funding. They were the only ones rejected by the NEA. A fourth organization, Great Lakes Film and Video, which sponsors a series of festivals, including a gay and lesbian festival, was restricted to use the funds for only the Milwaukee Black Film Festival. According to Roberto Bedoya, president of the National Association of Artists' Organizations, "Radice's last headline is so mean-spirited. Even though Clinton has been elected president, persecution isn't stopping. As gays and lesbians, we may be a little more visible, but we need to be just as vigilant in pursuing our civil rights as queer citizens."

Jill Collins, the NEA's director of public affairs, responds that "Radice's actions were neither mean-spirited nor politically motivated. She simply found the proposed sub-grants do not demonstrate artistic excellence and artistic merit worthy of support by this agency."

At press time, the three festivals organizers planned to file a formal appeal with Radice through NAMAC as quickly as possible. The ACLU has also agreed to handle the case and will both file an injunction to encumber the funds in question so they are not lost in the next fiscal year and a class action suit against the NEA for discrimination.

CATHERINE SAALFIELD

Catherine Saalfield is a film- and videomaker, curator, and consultant.

ETC EXTINGUISHES AIR

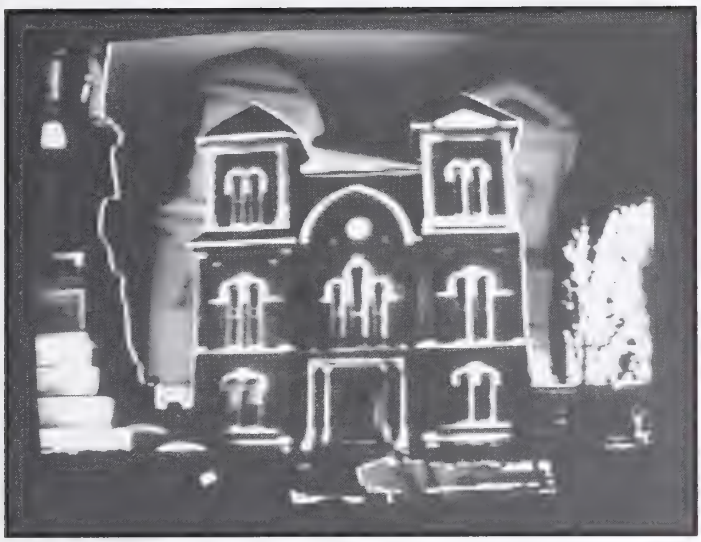
The 22-year-old Artist in Residence program at the Experimental Television Center (ETC) in Owego, New York, ended in September 1992 when grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the Ohio and Pennsylvania state arts councils, totalling approximately $14,000 or 25 percent of the program's budget, were not renewed.

Ralph Hocking, the program's founder and director, and Sherry Miller-Hocking, assistant director, will continue to run ETC's Electronic Grants program, which provides direct support to electronic media artists and organizations in New York State, and to keep the extensive video library open.

The independent community was nonetheless saddened by the news that the Artist in Residence (AIR) program is now defunct. "This was a very unique project," says Debby Silverfine, director of the electronic media and film program at the New York State Council on the Arts, a major funder of the program. "There's nothing else that's completely set up as an artists' retreat for experimental production time."

Residents at ETC lived and worked for three to five days without distractions in a spartan loft equipped with a cot, a hotplate, and a studio stocked with Amiga digital image processing computers. "I'd be making a video and look up and it would be midnight," says Joe D'Agostino, who has completed two residencies since 1983. Residents at ETC in the last year alone have exhibited their works at the Museum of Modern Art and the Smithsonian in the U.S., and at similar outlets in Canada, France, Germany, and Czechoslovakia.

So why did a program artists and funders alike call "original" and "important" fail to impress peer panels? Donna Strong, grants office director for the Ohio State Arts Council, says she thought that ETC's equipment wasn't "cutting edge" enough and also that the program was "too closed," as the same group of artists returned to do residen-



AIR's "atmosphere of freedom" inspired Philadelphia video artists Connie Coleman and Alan Powell to experiment with their imagery in works like *Radiation Therapy* (1983), created through the program.

Courtesy videomakers

cies year after year.

Sherry Miller-Hocking replies that "although a certain number of people wanted to return year after year because there aren't many facilities like this one, around half of the residents each year were new applicants."

Caroline Savage, media arts program director for the Pennsylvania Arts Council, which does not traditionally fund programs outside the state, says the council reevaluated its funding of the program last year when a newly appointed director clamped down on policies and, due to budget cuts, decided not to renew the grant.

Above all, however, the Hockings' self-professed aversion to networking and public relations efforts may have left them without the contacts necessary to bring in contributed income. "Ralph was always antagonistic towards fundraising," says D'Agostino, and adds that he once suggested Hocking contact an equipment manufacturer to donate computers in exchange for offering residencies to the company's technicians. But Hocking "didn't want to schmooze corporate types," D'Agostino recalls. "He wouldn't compromise what he was doing to fit the needs of the funders." Says Ralph Hocking, fundraising "takes an enormous amount of energy and commitment. I don't want to do fundraising. It's a pain."

Hocking's idealism has always been the main driving force behind the center. He began ETC in 1971 as a place where artists could explore the possibilities of new video technology free from the constraints of broadcasting conventions. The Hockings custom built ETC's studio, and resident artist Nam June Paik contributed some of his own equipment.

Even as video technology became more accessible with the rise of the Amiga computer in recent years, the program's spirit of experimentation prospered. "People who work with hardware are often in a very standard frame of mind," says David Haas, coordinator of the Philadelphia Independent Film/Video Association, "but ETC approached technology creatively." Philadelphia video artists Connie Coleman and Alan Powell built their own studio to resemble ETC's, but they still made the trip to upstate New York twice a year because of the "atmosphere of freedom" at the center. Coleman calls the AIR program an exercise in "total self-sufficiency" where she and her partner could "use video tools for creative purposes. It was real spiritual, never stylish, but it was a serious place you could go and think and work."

WENDY GREENE

Wendy Greene is a freelance writer living in Brooklyn, New York.

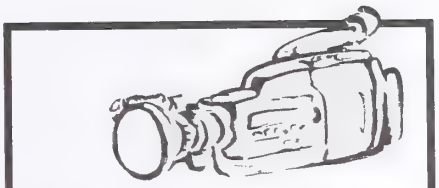
ACTIVISTS LOBBY OVER CABLE ACT'S ENACTMENT

Prompted by a new cable television law, six independent media advocates recently formed a group to ensure that independent and nonprofit producers and distributors, among others, have a voice in how the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) implements specific provisions of the act.

The Nonprofit Telecommunications Project, spearheaded by telecommunications consultant John Schwartz, is an initiative housed within the Consumer Federation of America. The federation is one of the main forces behind the October 5 enactment of the law dubbed the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992, which regulates all aspects of the cable TV industry.

The ad-hoc project's all-volunteer steering committee—Schwartz; DeeDee Halleck, an associate professor at the University of California, San Diego; Patricia Aufderheide, assistant professor, American University School of Communications; Lawrence Daressa, codirector of California Newsreel; Jeffrey Chester, codirector of the Center for Media Education; and James Yee, executive director of the National Asian American Telecommunications Association—planned to hold its first formal meeting in December.

"The public interest community—notably independent producers and nonprofits—has sat on the sidelines watching the cockfight between the



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cable and broadcast industries over control of the media pie. Now we are going to enter the arena and get a piece of pie for ourselves," says Chester.

The project, formed in November, has dual goals: working with the FCC to make sure that nonprofits' interests are not left out of the FCC's deliberations regarding implementation of certain sections of the law and providing information to independent producers and nonprofit telecommunications groups about how they can take advantage of four provisions in the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act.

The first provision involves **programming on direct broadcast satellites**. Under the new law, direct broadcast satellite operators are required to set aside four to seven percent of their channel capacity for "educational" programming. The project wants to lobby the FCC to make sure that access to the direct broadcast satellite channels for this purpose is affordable, that more—rather than fewer—channels are made available, and that foreign entities are not allowed to program the educational channels, Schwartz explains.

The second provision focuses on **leased access**. The law directs the FCC to set the maximum price cable operators may charge for leased access channels. The Telecommunications Project wants the FCC to adopt a special rate for nonprofits and earmark a portion of these channels for nonprofit use.

The third involves **cable carriage of noncommercial stations.** According to the law, a cable system with 36 or more channels is required to carry an unlimited number of public TV stations. But the system does not have to carry the signals of more than three stations if their programming is substantially duplicative. The law was slated to go into effect December 4, but the FCC is in the process of coming up with related rules that may affect noncommercial carriage. How the term "duplicative" is defined will be determined by the FCC in April. Now a cable system can argue that the stations are duplicative and stations can argue just as easily that they are not. The definition set forth by the FCC will help remedy such controversies in the future. "Our interest is that there is no cap at three stations," Schwartz says.

The final provision applies to **unused public access channels**. Cable operators may repossess unused public, educational, and governmental access channels in order to carry, among other things, public or low-power TV stations. Because these provisions took effect December 4, there is nothing for the project to do but make sure that entities operating or interested in operating so-called PEG channels know about the use-it-or-lose-it provision of the law.

The steering committee is currently trying to raise $60,000 by targeting foundations to bankroll the project, Schwartz and Chester say. The funds will be earmarked for various outreach activities.

"There's an opportunity for us to try to recoup losses that have occured over the years through deregulation of the cable and broadcast industries," says Halleck.

JEANNINE AVERSA

Jeannine Aversa is a senior editor at Multichannel News.



Intermedia Arts' Video Archive Project will preserve documentaries, experimental videos, and music, dance, and poetry performances, such as this early tape of Minnesota poet-turned-masculinist Robert Bly, *A Man Writes to a Part of Himself*, by Michael Hazard and Greg Pratt.

Courtesy Intermedia Arts

VIDEO ARCHIVE PRESERVES MINNESOTA MEMORIES

In September, Intermedia Arts of Minneapolis began work on its Video Archive Project, a curatorial undertaking that will both commemorate the organization's 20th anniversary in 1993 and preserve its past. "Intermedia Arts does not see itself as a museum, retaining, cataloging, and making available art work from the past," says Tom Borrup, the organization's executive director. "However, in its role of supporting new work, it is imperative that this work be documented and/or passed to another institution for preservation."

To carry out the mission, Intermedia Arts, a multidisciplinary center that fosters the development of independent video producers through education, services, and public screenings, created a partnership with the Minnesota Historical Society and KTCA-TV, a local public television station. After more than 2,500 tapes of various formats are documented, the society will house 300 to 400 restored tapes at its brand-new History Center in St. Paul (some will remain in a library at Intermedia Arts), and KTCA-TV is planning a two-and-a-half hour retrospective on the collection.

Emily Goldberg, the program's producer, describes the retrospective, slated to air in late autumn 1993, as "a showcase that will give a sense of the range of work that was done at Intermedia Arts over the past 20 years, and also show how there was really no other place like it." In addition to video works, the program will include interviews with independent producers who have used Intermedia Arts facilities.

Sally Mendzela, a Minnesota-based media producer, says the fact that Intermedia Arts is creating this archive with the Historical Society "really gives a wonderful boost to the psyche and the morale of independent producers. People are saying 'Yes, this is an independent work and we're going to archive it and preserve it.' It is great to have your work validated like that. It's also going to be an excellent data bank of images and information," she continued. "And a way to document the history of video and filmmakers themselves."

The project received a $25,000 grant from the Andy Warhol Foundation for Visual Arts in New York, which is "enough to get a handle on the collection—describe the objects and get them on a database," says Bonnie Wilson, curator of the Audio Visual Collections at the Historical Society. However, when that phase of the project ends in April, 1993, more funds will be needed to transfer several hundred 1/2" reel-to-reel tapes to a more stable format and to create viewing copies of the master tapes.

Although Wilson anticipates that researchers will make most use of the video collection, she stresses that it will be open to everyone: high school students, PhD candidates, and those who are just plain curious. The criteria for the collection consists of judging whether a tape contains information about Minnesota events, places, or people. "We're keeping the collection very parochial," says Video Archive Project assistant Rebecca Bachman, who evaluates whether or not the tapes are worth saving.

Much of the collection consists of documentaries on issues relevant to Minnesota, as well as experimental videos and music, dance, and poetry performances. Finds include a 1974 concert tape of Bonnie Raitt at the New Riverside Cafe, a small local restaurant, the trial of American Indian Movement activist Leonard Peltier, and early works by Minnesotan Mark Frost, who went on to produce *Hill Street Blues* and *Twin Peaks*, Bachman says.

"There is a significant body of information here that really can't be lost," says Wilson. "And if we don't save it, who will? It's our role to preserve all aspects of Minnesota history, and so



far, independent media is one aspect that has been so little preserved." Margaret Byrne, director of the L.A.-based National Moving Image Database, agrees: "To partner a highly respected organization like the Minnesota Historical Society and a visionary one like the Andy Warhol Foundation may finally put these very important and historically neglected materials—like Intermedia Arts' collection—back on the national agenda."

Artists and independent producers with ideas, information, or work they would like considered for the archives are encouraged to contact Intermedia Arts at (612) 627-4444.

JULIE CANIGLIA

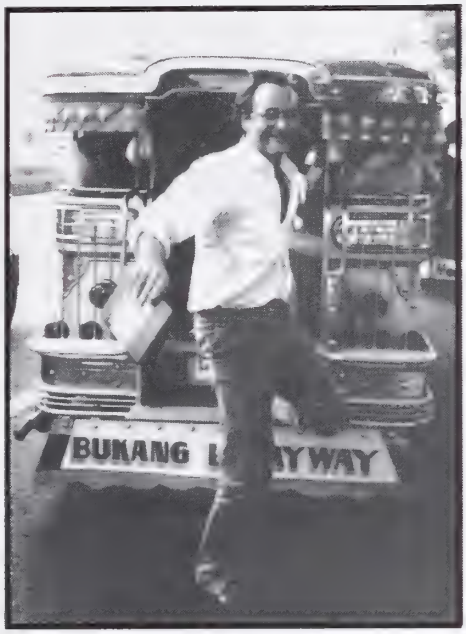
Julie Caniglia writes for City Pages, *a Minneapolis alternative weekly.*

BIG MAC NAMES BIG CHEESE

Almost two years after the death of its media champion William T. Kirby, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation has named its first media program officer. Patricia Boero, a documentarian, journalist, and media advocate, will be responsible for managing the bulk of the foundation's media grant-making activities, which are expected to total some $7-million this year.

Boero comes to MacArthur from the Rockefeller Foundation, where she was a Warren Weaver Fellow working with independent film and video. A former radio reporter for the BBC World Service and local TV producer for CNN in Havana and Managua, she has produced radio and television documentaries and news in Australia and Latin America and has directed documentaries on Central and South America for TV Latina. She also served as a director with Film Australia's Women's Film Unit in 1984 and, in the early 1980s, worked as a reporter and anchor for Australia's SBS Multicultural Television. She was a member of the New South Wales (Australia) government's Women's Advisory Council, executive officer of the Ethnic Communities Council, and founded La Mascara Theater Group, as well as *El Expresso*, a Spanish language weekly newspaper. Since 1988 she has been active in the International Public Television Screening Conference (INPUT) and currently serves as its coordinator for Latin America.

At the time of Kirby's death in late 1990, the MacArthur Foundation had spent roughly $70-million for the support of film, video, and other media since 1978. As a vice president of the board of directors, Kirby was a staunch champion of independent film and video within the $3-billion private philanthropic foundation and was instrumental in establishing it as a funding priority. The foundation has provided direct grants to media arts centers, funded public television programming and the Learning Channel's showcase series *The Independents*, and granted fellowships to individual mediamakers and scholars through the MacArthur "genius grants"—substantial, unre-



Christian Blackwood
Photo: John Murphy

stricted five-year fellowships.

Before his death Kirby recommended that a staff person responsible for media be named, but his concept went unrealized at the time, leaving a void within the foundation and doubts in the independent community about the future of MacArthur support. Although a 1991 annual program reevaluation affirmed the institution's commitment to media and Kirby's proposal to create a staff position specifically for the field, Boero is the first to fill the post. Prior to her appointment Woodward A. Wickham, director of the General Program and vice president for public affairs, managed media grants and, according to Ted Hearne, a communications consultant for MacArthur, the programs have remained largely unchanged.

Boero does not foresee any dramatic shifts in the focus or funding of programs. "The direction set by Bill Kirby will continue," she assures. "He was very good at strategic funding, at targeting money so it would go a long way." Boero emphasizes her and MacArthur's commitment to supporting the "diversity of voices" represented by independents, continuing the tradition set by Kirby, which has served independents well.

ELLEN LEVY

CHRISTIAN BLACKWOOD: 1942-1992

"I am aware constantly of time. You cannot borrow it, you cannot beg for it, you cannot save it. I have all of a sudden this marvelous place, but I still doesn't have enough time...that's what saddens me. Sometimes I wish I could live forever."

— Marta Becket from Christian Blackwood's 1989 documentary film *Motel*.

When Christian Blackwood died last July at age 50, we lost one of the great voices in documentary filmmaking. Not only was he one of the best handheld cinematographers, but also a producer of iconoclastic portrait films. The lyricism of his camera translated into style and grace on the screen. His films, including *Motel*, *Private Conversations*, and *All By Myself: Eartha Kitt*, were marked by the rhythm of his photography and his ability to expose his documentary subjects intimately. Christian's personality was all over his movies. In *Motel*, Christian evoked the expansiveness of the Southwestern landscape while capturing what was most familiar in the unlikely setting of three somewhat peculiar motels. Among his other films were several on filmmaking: *Signs: Lino Broka*, *Sam Fuller*, and *Roger Corman: Hollywood's Wild Angel*. He also directed *Yesterday's Witness*, on the history of Israel, and *Black Harvest*, a feature drama.

I met Christian in 1983 while working for his brother, Michael. Christian had recently moved downtown to the West Village to start his own company. Michael's office was always abuzz at the mention of Christian's name. When I met him I knew why. He was sharp-witted, charming, and handsome. He had an insatiable desire to tease, and eventually I would learn that the easiest way to elicit one of his wonderfully infectious laughs was to tease him right back.

In 1985, I was hired to work with Christian editing *Nik and Murray*, about choreographers Alwin Nikolais and Murray Louis. He was one of those rare filmmakers who knew exactly what he wanted in the cutting room. He saw the story before it even unfolded. It was a constant challenge working with him. He thought nothing of 12-hour editing days and dismissed fatigue and hunger. Christian seemed to survive on coffee, cigarettes, and minimal sleep.

During the final days of editing, he would visit us in the cutting room at one or two in the morning with his bottle of Napoleon cognac and a cigarette dangling from his lip. He would take a seat, watch us work, make us laugh, and then disappear to his apartment upstairs. My last night on that film was spent catching a few hours of sleep under Christian's desk and I fancied myself a soldier in the Christian Blackwood army.

More recently, Christian had been producing a number of shorts for HBO. He had expressed feeling confined by documentaries and had been negotiating for some time to make a feature film. Christian seemed on the brink of artistic fulfillment and yet did not live to see this one ambition realized.

I, like many of my peers, was eager to work with Christian again. He was one of the most demanding, yet charming people in this business. His untimely death leaves us all with a painful loss, but also a tremendous legacy. He will be greatly missed.

ELIZABETH RICH

Elizabeth Rich is a filmmaker who lives in New York City.

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SEEING THROUGH AIDS

Media Activists Join Forces with NYC Department of Health

ANNE RUBENSTEIN

Catherine Saalfield and Lillian Jimenez are not having a good day. Hardly anyone has shown up for the afternoon session of their Seeing Through AIDS media workshop. This three-year-old program, designed to teach New York City healthcare workers how to use videotapes in AIDS education and counseling, is held at various locations throughout the five boroughs. The two are conducting today's workshop in a sterile classroom of a central Brooklyn hospital. When three social workers and a woman who trains teenage peer counselors appear, Jimenez and Saalfield (who is also a contributing editor for this magazine) agree to go on with an informal version of the workshop. They seem delighted to be there, however small their audience. Clearly, repeated exposure to the videos they present has not dimmed their enthusiasm.



Seeing Through AIDS workshops introduce health workers to a range of independent productions on AIDS, such as Ellen Spiro's amusing documentary *Diana's Hair Ego: AIDS Info Up Front.*

Photo: Ellen Spiro, courtesy videomaker

The social workers are less enthusiastic, however, and seem to have come more to get out of the office than to learn about AIDS media. Jimenez is about to screen a segment from the Gay Mens Health Crisis video *Thinking about Death.* With sympathy and curiosity, she asks the participants, "Do you think about death a lot?"

Long pause. One social worker finally smirks, "Yeah, well, we have trainings for it every month."

Saalfield, fiddling with the VCR, looks up. "Really?"

Long, long pause. The other social worker finally explains, "Nah, just kidding." In silence, we watch a segment of the tape, then a longer piece of *With Loving Arms* (Child Welfare League). Someone's beeper goes off. Everyone laughs nervously. Finally a more serious discussion about care-giver burnout begins.

As Saalfield later puts it, "Healthcare people involved with AIDS have a very tough time. It's so hard... I just want to offer them something that I hope makes their work a little easier. If it doesn't, too bad; if it does, well, we're happy."

On an average day, the Seeing Through AIDS workshops draw between 30 and 100 participants—nutritionists, nurses and nurses' aides, doctors, technicians, administrators, therapists, educators, and others with a professional interest in HIV or AIDS. The program is funded by the New York City Department of Health (DOH) through a grant to Media Network, with additional money from the North Star Foundation and Hunt Alternatives Fund. Jimenez, Saalfield, and trainee Marina Alvarez offer about 15 workshops per year, which are intended to show healthcare workers how they might use media with their clients, expose them to videos they might be unaware of, and, ultimately, bring these videos to a much wider audience.

Generally, Saalfield and Jimenez show up to 20 clips drawn from a pool of hundreds of videotapes, most of which are by independent producers. All the videos presented through Seeing Through AIDS are available for free to healthcare workers from the Department of Health's video lending library, so the workshops give professionals new ways of using resources to which they already have access. Tapes range from Gran Fury's 30-second PSA *Kissing Doesn't Kill* to M. Neema Barnette's 17-minute drama *Are You With Me?*, about a divorced mother who has trouble practicing the safer sex she preaches, to documentaries that range in tone from amusing (Ellen Spiro's *Diana's Hair Ego: AIDS Info Up Front*) to angry (Phil Zwickler's *Needle Nightmare*).

A week later, three dozen people crowd into the conference room of a philanthropic organization in Manhattan for another Seeing Through AIDS workshop, this one designed for people who work with teenagers. The people attending are mostly educators from a service organization for Latino youth, joined by a smattering of administrators,

outreach workers, and therapists from programs around the city. This group seems highly motivated, although the level of education about AIDS and related issues varies widely. Participants introduce themselves with comments ranging from, "This is all new to me," to "I've been working in this field for a decade." Some report having seen many of the videos on the afternoon's program, and some already use a few with their clients. Others have never heard of, much less seen, any AIDS videos. The challenge for Alvarez, Jimenez, and Saalfield is to make sure everyone leaves with some new information or skills, without confusing or boring anyone.

The workshop begins by asking participants to think about their own experiences of marginalization by mainstream media. This quickly draws participants in, since the majority of people in the room are of African or Latino descent. "Media is an imperfect tool," Jimenez warns, as she shifts the subject to AIDS media. "It doesn't represent everyone's experience, and you may have to use more than one tape because the perfect tape isn't there for you." Saalfield gives a pep talk on how video enables us to interrupt and question what we see on screen. This prompts an educator to describe how she sees kids talking back to the TV, and from there the group takes off.

Jimenez raises a number of topics—peer pressure, negotiating safer sex, family communications, homophobia, death, life after HIV seroconversion—and shows clips; participants respond to what they see and to each other. The facilitators keep them grounded in media; their approach to the workshops explicitly rules out medical issues and focuses instead on their own areas of expertise. "We deal only with the psycho-social aspects," says Jimenez, "all these issues that existed before AIDS and were exacerbated by AIDS," including racism, homophobia, poverty, and sexism. When the educators wander off towards pedagogical issues, someone cues up another video clip. Over and over, Jimenez asks, "How could you use this?" Sometimes Saalfield chimes in with, "Would it help if you tried...?"

Possible strategies for media use in AIDS care and prevention vary from highly passive to extremely active. For instance, some hospitals have "rabbits," video systems that allow them to show the same tape in every waiting room; surely tapes that raise AIDS issues or provide information in the context of a narrative, like *Vida*, *The Salt Mines*, or *Dolores*, would be just as diverting as the commercial TV or rented movies often seen in waiting rooms. The workshop offers more interventionist approaches, suggesting video-based role-plays and mid-tape discussions. A favorite technique is to stop a tape at a cliff-hanger moment—e.g., when a couple is just about to make love and one brings up the subject of condoms—and ask the workshop participants to discuss the scene.

Interventionist techniques allow for the careful use of mainstream pieces which, seen whole, are discouragingly sexist or racist, or are full of misinformation. The workshop demonstrates, for instance, how John Leguizamo's HBO special *Mambo Mouth* can be turned into a tool for discussing masculinity and peer pressure. The facilitators play a clip in which a teenage boy boasts to a friend that he's lost his virginity: "I'm a man! Do I look different?" When the laughter dies down, Jimenez says, "Okay! *Now* is the moment to bring up peer pressure. Ask them whether this kid is lying." An educator raises her hand: "This would work for an all-boy group, but..." Saalfield repeats what all three workshop leaders have said already, "No tape is perfect for every purpose. If you need a peer pressure tape for a mixed group..." She names three of four other tapes; everyone takes notes.

Reverend Mrs. Audrey Johnson, a pediatric nurse and Baptist minister, speaks out in *Women and Children Last*, a documentary about women and AIDS by Gini Reticker and Amber Hollibaugh.

Courtesy videomakers

During the break halfway through the three-hour session, people gather in knots by the coffee machine, talking rapidly, excited. Bits of conversation rise above the general hubbub: "I heard the *craziest* statistics yesterday...." "Are they gonna talk about condom failure?" "Yeah, but was that what *you* learned when *you* were a kid?" The workshop is pushing buttons.

According to Media Network director Don Derosby, the Department of Health (DOH) hopes that after the workshop these excited participants will use the videos both in working with clients and to educate their colleagues. The DOH likes the "technological edge and the user friendliness," Derosby says, but most of all it likes the chance to "push the information down deeper" in health care organizations.

Later, the organizers explain that the form of the workshops is no accident. They have been evolving ever since they were founded three years ago by media activist Ray Navarro, who died of AIDS-related illness in 1990. They have become increasingly interactive, moving away from a format where the media "expert" would lecture the medical "experts," then leave. The facilitators have also become increasingly confident about integrating gay and lesbian concerns into every section of the workshop, rather than ghettoizing them in a separate section.

"Lillian and I have worked hard on them," says Saalfield. Alvarez points out that her being HIV-positive, her identification with the Latina community, her background in media (she codirected *Invisible Women* with Ellen Spiro), and her activism give her an authority that even medical experts have to respect. "We have something to say to each other," she notes.

The program is now beginning to expand. Alvarez was brought in during the fall. A new grant from the Hunt Alternatives Fund will allow 15 additional workshops next year to be aimed specifically at AIDS issues for women of color. Other expansion plans involve targeting workshops for people who work with youths outside the healthcare system, especially social workers and teachers. Next year, too, Media Network plans a "comprehensive evaluation" of the Seeing



***Vida*, an AIDS prevention film for Latina women, is one of a series written, directed, and aimed at Latino and African-American audiences by AIDSFILMS.**

Photo: Prashant Gupta, courtesy AIDSFILMS



Through AIDS program, for which they have requested Ford Foundation funding, says Derosby. This evaluation, in turn, would encourage more funders outside the DOH to step in. The DOH is "jubilant" over the program, reports Derosby, but "it's frustrating because they don't have money to expand it." Finally, Media Network and Seeing Through AIDS organizers are working on expanding outside New York City, beginning with New York State. "That's very tough," admits Derosby, "because outside of New York City it is very difficult to replicate the AIDS video library system."

The organizers see the workshops as a new model for alternative media. "As a producer," says Saalfield, who has made videos on her own and with ACT UP's DIVA-TV collective, "the idea that a tape I make about AIDS or HIV is going around on the festival circuit just doesn't do it for me. That's not enough. I want it to be *used*. I want people to start them and stop them and argue with them, with no fancy thing about me being an *artiste*." She yearns for more HIV-related tapes about young girls and about lesbians, and wishes that they could give tapes away to educators directly, rather than only making them available through the Department of Health library. She thinks big: "We could explode people's whole idea about media, I think. Everyone is so bored of the standard, mainstream media. Nurses and doctors and people with HIV, too. Things could be really different."

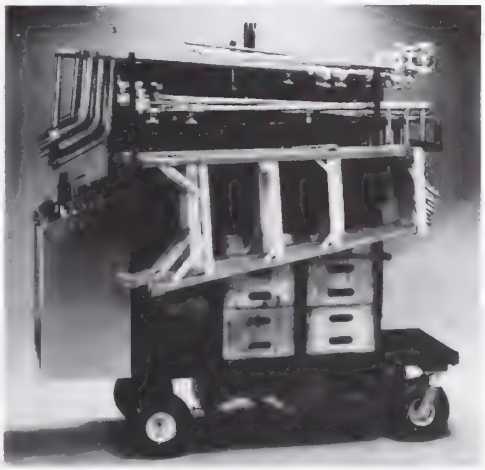
Jimenez—whose long career in media includes producing documentaries as well as years as a funder, organizer, curator, and consultant—adds, "I moan and groan about some pieces because I think the camerawork is lousy or the audio is problematic or the structure is wrong. But people learn to work with what's out there. They are really adaptable." She believes the "the next step is talking to the filmmakers...to tell them what works. Not all your work needs to be utilitarian, but in this area, you should know how to be helpful. You don't have to be mainstream to make a difference."

Anne Rubenstein is a graduate student of Latin America history and a fellow of the Center for Critical Analysis of Contemporary Culture at Rutgers University. She has written for In the Life, The Comic Journal, Outweek, *and the* Village Voice.

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SALLY BERGER

Imagining Indians, a feature-length documentary by Hopi video artist Victor Masayesva, looks at the commodification of native culture: from collector trafficking in sacred objects to the non-native usurpation of spiritual ceremonies and native culture.

Courtesy videomaker



Dreamspeakers—the name for the festival of First Nations film and video—comes from "dreamtalkers," the Dene peoples' way of referring to "dreaming with one's eyes open." It is also a name recently given to describe the visualization of native culture through television and film. Dreamspeakers was held in Edmonton, Alberta, the third week in September as the weather was swinging from hot to cold, from rain to sun to snow, and the birch tree leaves covering the Great Plains were a russet yellow.

The festival was structured as both a cultural event for the city and a meeting ground for indigenous peoples to further First Nations media-making. "First Nations" is a recently adopted term that refers to the self-governing nations prior to contact by invading conquerors. It is a global concept that encompasses terms such as "aboriginal," "native," "Indian," and "indigenous," and is a claim against the more negative connotations of "Fourth World."

A first-time event, Dreamspeakers was organized by the Aboriginal Filmmakers Association of Alberta (AFMAA) and was started as an alternative to the Indian Summer World Festival of Aboriginal Motion Pictures, held in the Alberta community of Pincher Creek from the mid-1980s to 1990. According to AFMAA president and Dreamspeakers committee member Greg Coyes, "In April of 1991, the Aboriginal Filmmakers Association of Alberta brought 50 producers, writers, directors, and actors together for the first time from across the nation. What came up was the lack of a festival that served aboriginal people. Pincher Creek had evolved away from that. We took the initiative to mount a festival; this put us in competition for provincial funds." A year-and-a-half later the aboriginal-run Dreamspeakers was a reality, with funding from a variety of governmental and nongovernmental sources, Edmonton-based sponsors, and the help of many volunteers.

Dreamspeaker's daytime program, centrally based at a Holiday Inn, included hands-on workshops, plenary sessions, and a readily available screening room. Throughout the city of Edmonton, singing, drumming, and theatrical performances took place along with poetry readings and storytelling, bands ranging from traditional to heavy metal to hybrid styles of music, an art exhibit, and food and craft sales.

Every evening public screenings were held at four city theaters. The programs often began with a speech, followed by a live performance, then the films or videotapes. Over 50 films and videos were screened: documentaries, feature-length dramas, and animation made largely by indigenous directors from nine or so countries (Canada, New Zealand, the U.S., the Republic of Vanuata, Australia, France, Taiwan, Great Britain, and a Peru/Sweden coproduction).

The majority of the works came from Canada, and most were documentaries about indigenous history, culture, and art. *Starting Fire with Gunpowder*, curated by David Poisey and David Hansen, examined Inuit programming produced for the Arctic and northern regions of Canada. *Heartland*, by Greg Coyes, explored different indigenous responses to the deforestation of Canadian timberland. There was a retrospective of works by Willy Dunn, one of the first native Canadian filmmakers. Another sidebar featured a selection of Canada's production by and about indigenous Canadians, which spanned the 30-year history of the National Film Board (NFB). This included Alanis Obomsawin's documentary about foster care, *Richard Cardinal: Cry of a Metis Boy*. Obomsawin was one of the first women



In 1990, 300 Lakota Sioux rode through bitter sub-zero weather to mourn the lives lost 100 years earlier at Wounded Knee. *Wiping the Tears of Seven Generations*, by Fidel Moreno (Yaqui/Huichol) and Gary Rhine, tells the story of the Big Foot Memorial Ride.

Courtesy filmmakers

native producers, who has been actively producing social issue films for the past two decades.

Documentaries from the United States included Hopi video artist Victor Masayesva's newly released *Imagining Indians* and Fidel Moreno's *Peyote Road*, about outlawed sacred Indian religious rituals. Films from Down Under were well represented, with the Aboriginal Unit of the Australian Broadcasting Corporation presenting Frances Peter's *Tent Embassy*, while *Jindalee Lady*, by aboriginal Australian director Brian Syron, and New Zealand Maori director Barry Barclay's *Ngati* and *Te Rua* number among the festival's outstanding dramatic features. These films represent some of the first features made by indigenous makers. The more mainstream yet activist *Incident at Oglala*, one of the few films at Dreamspeakers directed by a non-indigenous person, Michael Apted from Great Britain, dramatizes the controversial conviction of AIM activist Leonard Peltier following an FBI shoot-out on the Lakota Pine Ridge Reservation in 1975. Other notable works included *Navaho Talking Picture* (Arlene Bowman, USA), *Nightcries* (Tracey Moffat, Australia), and *The Man from Island West* (Huang Mingchuan, Taiwan).

Events leading up to the festival dramatically mirrored the frustrations felt by aboriginal writers, producers, directors, and actors regarding the barriers facing them in producing their work and selling it in the marketplace. A week before the

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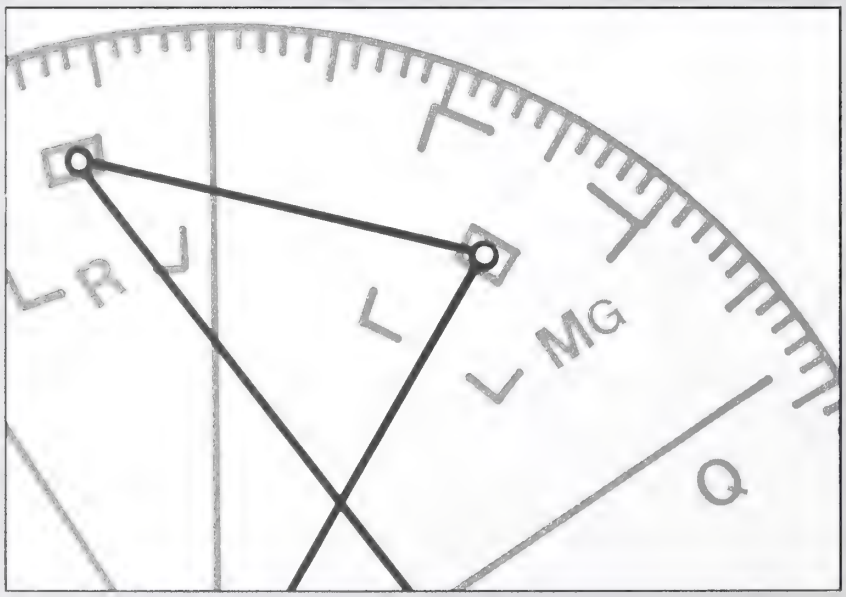
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festival, pressure was exerted by the First Nations Film Makers Alliance for better international aboriginal representation. Their complaints were heeded; at the last minute films were added and deleted from the program, giving a stronger voice to indigenous-produced work. According to Coyes, "The controversy was over films included in the program regarded as native stories told by creative teams that did not include native involvement... There was a voice that said we should not be programming non-native films ahead of native peoples.'"

This sentiment was palpable at the festival. Many natives view moving-image media as a natural transition from the oral, imagistic traditions of indigenous people and see themselves as contemporary storytellers. They have the goal of reconstructing and preserving the history and culture of First Nations peoples. Film and video allow them to collect stories from elders, animate the creation myths which traditionally have been handed down orally, and present the lives and personal memories of aboriginal peoples who have largely been ignored. For some, like veteran Metis director Wil Campbell, the documentary is a logical direction: "We need to make documentaries because we are going through a healing process."

Some entities in Canada do support native productions: the Inuit Broadcasting Corporation and other native communications societies covering the Arctic and northern territories, the National Film Board of Canada's Studio One and Studio D, and independent production companies. But indigenous Canadian producers want to move quickly toward greater control of their own images. New efforts are being made to redress the lack of work originating from the native community and to provide financial backing through federal and provincial government and nongovernment sources. The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation has a new 13-part dramatic series, tentatively titled *The Four Directions*, which features stories by native writers. Nonetheless, Maria Armstrong, the series' non-native creative head, was challenged by producers at the festival who felt that *The Four Directions* would not clearly reflect native voices nor go far enough in employing native crews and directors. Studio One was founded last year as an independent aboriginal studio of the NFB and is headed by producer Carol Geddes of the Tlingit Nation. However, it has limited funds; so far it has given small grants to approximately 50 native projects and has provided badly needed production training.

The film and video producers who brought their work to Dreamspeakers from around the world had, in many cases, certain common interests. One recurrent theme centered on how indigenous history has been reshaped by mainstream media, government, religion, and education. Actress Tantoo Cardinal made this clear in her introduction to *The Learning Path*, a work by Metis producer Loretta Todd on the trauma of being sent



Maori and modern cultures clash in *Te Rua* (*The Storehouse*) a German/New Zealand coproduction about the spiritual and cultural appropriation of Pacific traditions by Europeans.

Photo: Andrzej Nowakowzki, courtesy filmmaker

to residential schools for indigenous children: "When I was a young girl," recalled Cardinal, "I felt a sense of shame about being Indian. Many people were punished about speaking their native language. We were made ignorant of our history and our culture. And our residential school system can take credit for that. To be Indian was to be part of the past; we had no future."

Hopi director Victor Masayesva's feature-length, experimental documentary *Imagining Indians* navigates issues that touch upon the core of native identity. It addresses the exploitation of the native community in the making of commercial films such as *Dances with Wolves, The Dark Wind*, *Thunderheart*, and *A Man Called Horse*, the buying and selling of sacred objects by collectors, and the usurping of spiritual ceremonies and native culture by non-natives.

Many of the festival's documentaries look back at history to learn from the past and reenvision the future. Christine Welsh, who moderated the producers' workshop, presented *Women in the Shadows*, a moving portrait exploring her roots as a Metis—part-white, part Indian—and the largely unknown history of mixed-race families who have denied their ancestry to assimilate into dominant cultures. Using documentary footage and reenactments, Welsh discloses how she meets her own personal challenge "to survive as a whole and healthy person without having to reject a part of what I am." A similar theme is found in Arlene Bowman's *Navaho Talking Picture*, about her youthful quest to film her traditional grandmother on the Navaho reservation.

Fidel Moreno (Yaqui/Huichol) and Gary Rhine's *Wiping the Tears of Seven Generations* is about the Lakota Sioux and the Big Foot Memorial Ride, which took place in 1990, 100 years after the Wounded Knee massacre. The film incorporates archival photographs taken by the U.S. government at the massacre and contemporary interviews with memorial riders. As participant Birgil Kill Straight explained, "The ride was made to set the pace for the next seven generations, not to commemorate the 100th anniversary."

Another broad theme evident in documentaries from the Solomon Islands to Vancouver to the Amazon is the subject of the deforestation and environmental destruction that results from the corporate development of native lands. Coyes' *Heartland* investigates the lives of indigenous people in the foothills of Alberta and the West Coast of Vancouver Island. Here the native communities are split over the heart of native Canada, which is the forest. Some work for the timber companies in Alberta, while others, in Vancouver, live on the land and oppose its destruction. In developing this story Coyes decided to highlight the conflict because ordinarily, "Aboriginal people are all painted with the same brush."

The videotape *Em i Graun Blong Yumi* (*This Is Our Land*) was presented by Somalian Patrick Kekae from the SEI! Theater Group and Jacob Sams. Kekae's opening words were in reference to the spirit of native forests: "I have been dreaming and I am here." *Em i Graun Blong Yumi* depicts several theater groups going into wilderness areas of Melanesia, including the Republic of Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, and Papua New Guinea, to educate people about health issues, community conflicts, and multinational deforestation propositions that ignore their community laws, constitutional rights, and indigenous culture. The Wan Smol Bag acting troupe visits an isolated transitional community on the Sepik River in Papua New Guinea—one of the few remaining primitive forests—to examine through parody and reenactment the tactics used by corporate developers to gain access to the territory.

The Maori from Aerotera (New Zealand) and aboriginal Australians were an influential presence at the festival because of their experience working in both documentary and feature films. Dreamspeakers board member and Dene director Raymond Yakeleya noted, "The Maori are a great inspiration." However, different circumstances

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have shaped the development of indigenous media in Canada and New Zealand. There are more than 50 different languages spoken in Canada with an aboriginal population of six percent. The Maori in New Zealand share a common language and make up 15 percent of the overall population. Nonetheless, the Maori in attendance were more than willing to share knowledge and advice.

Maori director Barry Barclay's first feature, *Ngati*, was selected for the Critic's Week at Cannes in 1987. He led the director's workshop with a behind-the-scenes approach and gentle manner that belied the power of his filmmaking. *Ngati* was screened with his second feature, *Te Rua* (*The Storehouse*) a German/New Zealand coproduction. *Te Rua* is about the spiritual and cultural appropriation of Pacific traditions by Europeans. Three sacred wooden carvings from the fictional Uritoto region of New Zealand, stolen 100 years ago, have been purchased by a Berlin museum. The carvings are rediscovered by a young Maori poet, who is drawn to them by their spiritual power and through the dreams of an old Maori woman. He embarks on a crusade to return the carvings with the initially unwilling aid of a Maori lawyer and sympathetic Maori activists. Unsuccessful, they set up a protest in a squatters' building and turn the tables by stealing three Roman busts. The white women who assist these men ultimately remain separate from the struggle, dramatically emphasizing the Maori point of view that the fight for sovereignty remains with the aboriginal people.

Tainui Television producers Morehu McDonald and Tukoroirangi Morgan, from New Zealand, are successful pioneers in the design of an independent Maori television station. They are adamant that whites play only secondary, if any, role in their productions. Their documentary on the largest biannual Maori cultural event, featuring traditional dance, was aired on both New Zealand networks. Morgan said the entire staff was Maori except for two whites, who owned the equipment they needed.

The Maori men were vocal about recognizing the powerful cultural role of women (although there are fewer women directors than men). One outstanding female director is Riwia Brown, who wrote and directed *Roimata*, a drama about a young rural Maori woman who travels to the city to live with her urbanized half-sister. *Roimata* was written as part of *E Tipu E Rea* (*Grow Up Tender Young Shoot*), a series of Maori dramas produced after the Te Maunkau Trust was established in 1988. This entity, created by Television New Zealand, the New Zealand Film Commission, and Te Manu Aute, a committee of Maori film and television communicators, was designed to create programming by Maori talent for broad audiences and to provide training for young Maori filmmakers.

Frances Peters, an aboriginal woman working for the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, wrote and produced *Tent Embassy*, which looks at the twentieth anniversary of the struggle for aboriginal rights in Australia. In 1972 four young activ-

ists set up a Tent Embassy in front of Parliament to announce the aboriginal people's sovereignty and to seek their fundamental rights to land. Peters uses archival footage and interviews with the original activists and younger people who have no memory of the event to reflect on cultural loss, the consequences of assimilation, and social activism.

Dreamspeakers brought together Maori, Dene, Cree, Ojibway, Sami, Hopi, Metis, Aboriginal Australians, and other indigenous peoples. Although diverse, all share the common experience of colonization and repression. Throughout the week participants reflected briefly on their painful histories. But they mostly focused on looking ahead, making changes, and taking action toward the creation of their own images. Ideas for international collaborations flourished in the producers' workshop. One project that was already in progress and was further developed during Dreamspeakers was *From Spirit to Spirit*. This television series is an impressive endeavor because it is one of the first coproductions uniting so many different indigenous groups—Maoris, Australian Aboriginals, Samis from Norway, and Canadian natives.

By the end of the week, two days of plenary sessions and screenings were preempted so participants could meet to form an international alliance with the key purpose of raising the visibility of stories written, directed, and crewed by First Nations people. The new group, called First Nations Film and Video World Alliance, will be formally established by 1994 at a World Film Festival in Canada. Its membership will be based on the descendants of First Nations, with the membership determined by the First Nations community. Wil Campbell, a skilled organizer and 28-year veteran director from Canada, is co-spokesperson of the new group along with Ngatai Huata of New Zealand.

The objectives of the alliance are to raise awareness of First Nations' issues. They aim to establish a film and video communications network; to ensure that traditional lands, language, and culture are protected and preserved; to implement exchanges of First Nations artists, film- and videomakers, and technicians; to establish national and international conferences for First Nations mediamakers; to promote the survival of mother tongues as the first language; to ensure the environmental participation of First Nations people; to support projects or teaching of First Nations history and culture; and to stimulate the distribution of First Nations film and video productions.

This final outcome of Dreamspeakers was spontaneous. "The First Nations Film and Video World Alliance was the most exciting development," said Coyes. "That wasn't a goal, but it happened. Dreamspeakers was a gathering of aboriginal people who had found their voice."

Sally Berger is executive director of International Film Seminars.

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GIANT TO THE NORTH

Toronto International Film Festival of Festivals

DARYL CHIN

With every film festival that has remained in existence over the long haul, there are ebbs and flows, ups and downs. One 17-year-old festival on the upswing is the Toronto International Film Festival of Festivals. Initially devised as a North American round-up of the best of the film festivals held in the spring and summer (Rotterdam, Berlin, Cannes, Locarno, and Venice), the Toronto festival has become daunting in magnitude: it seems as if every year there are new sections. The festival, held September 10-29, 1992, packaged 320 films into 11 programs, including Contemporary World Cinema, First Cinema (directorial debuts), The Edge ("Filmmaking that ignores the rules"), Midnight Madness, sidebars on Asian and Latin American cinema, and more.

In the case of every prominent festival, there is always the test case, the example that proves the festival's importance to the business of film. For Toronto, the test case occured in 1989, when several films that were considered doomed by the Los Angeles film industry—*Roger and Me* and *Drugstore Cowboy*—were screened and, as a result of their favorable reception in Toronto, went on to general acclaim. Since then, U.S. distributors, exhibitors, and critics have descended upon Toronto every September, like a swarm of locusts on a field of wheat.

Toronto stands as a model for an international film festival. The term "multicultural" is, by now, fraught with all sorts of baggage, but Toronto is proudly a "multicultural" city. People from specific ethnic groups will buy tickets not only to films about themselves, but also are interested in seeing work about other groups. The idea that a mainstream exists is belied by the sheer diversity of the festival: although larger Hollywood films like *Mr. Saturday Night* and *Peter's Friends* are shown at the festivals' largest theaters, the Elgin and the Bloor, these are not assumed to be the only films of general interest. Press coverage was extensive on such films as *Careful*, by the quirky Canadian director Guy Maddin, *Just Another Girl on the IRT*, a feature about an African American teenage girl by first-time director Leslie Harris, and a three-hour documentary on Noam Chomsky, *Manufacturing Consent*—surely films distinctly out of the mainstream.



The sell-out crowds for Mark Achbar and Peter Wintonick' *Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media* —a dense documentary on the linguistics scholar and social activist—attests to the sophistication of Toronto audiences.

Photo: Jerry Barrett, courtesy Necessary Illusions

The fact that Toronto is a wildly diverse city, with people of many races and ethnic groups, means that almost every film is able to find its audience. *Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky and the Media*, by Mark Achbar and Peter Wintonick, is a case in point. It screened at 10 o'clock in the morning. Everyone I knew figured that getting to the theater at 9 a.m. would be sufficient, but the line had started forming long before. By the time tokens were handed out, most of the industry and press people were not able to get in. A sold-out screening this early in the morning for a very detailed, dense, highly verbal documentary about the linguistics scholar and social activist is a testimony to the openness and the dedication of the Toronto audience.

Manufacturing Consent was one of a number of Canadian premieres that helped make the Festival of Festivals special. Another was *Forbidden Love*, the docudrama by Aerlyn Weissman and Lynne Fernie. Attempting to claim a lesbian culture from the 1950s, the film starts with those pulp, paperback novels from that period. In addition to interviewing Ann Bannon, one prominent author, the filmmakers interviewed a number of women who mention those novels as being important to their sexuality. Despite the specialized subject matter, the audience at the the sold-out screening was not exclusively female. Likewise, no public screening that I encountered during the festival was attended solely by one specific interest group. The festival also showcased several other films dealing with the attempt to define a lesbian history: Laurie Colbert and Dominique Cardona's *Thank God I'm a Lesbian*, also from Canada, and Barbara Hammer's marvellously inventive and highly emotional *Nitrate Kisses*, from the United States.

Just as the Toronto festival has a reputation for spotlighting innovative, alternative films, so too does the Toronto audience demostrate a willingness to see such work. One couple I talked with while on line was typical, dividing their list of choices: he was interested in action films and had seen Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*, Abel Ferrara's *The Bad Lieutenant* , and John Woo's *Hard-Boiled*, while she had gone to a number of "literary" films, including Sally Potter's *Orlando* and Jean-Jacques Annaud's *The Lover*. Both went to see George Sluizer's elegant and understated *Utz*, an adaptation of Bruce Chatwin's novel about a European art collector, as well as Stanley Kwan's intricate and complex *Actress*, his biographical film about the Chinese movie star Ruan Ling Yu.

Orlando was among the films that created a stir

this year. Sally Potter's adaptation of Virginia Woolf's novel came to the festival after appearing at the Venice Film Festival, where it won the International Catholic Prize. An international coproduction partially shot in Russia, *Orlando* arrived in Toronto without North American distribution. By the end of the festival, the buzz surrounding the film caused at least three firm offers. Sony Classics ultimately picked up the film. Clara Law's *Autumn Moon* came to Toronto after winning the Grand Prize at the Locarno Film Festival. A charming, delicate comedy about the friendship of a Japanese tourist and a Chinese girl in Hong Kong, this movie was well-received, but got caught in a festival timing trap. Since it was also in the New York Film Festival, held a few weeks later, distributors who were interested in *Autumn Moon* claimed they had to wait until it received its New York reviews. Other films reported to have found North American distributors by the end of the festival were *Okohe*, Takehiro Nakajima's sardonic and witty account of a young woman's friendship with a gay couple, and *Hyenas*, an adaptation of Durrenmatt's play *The Visit* by Senegalese director Djibril Diop Mambety, which proved to be a sophisticated crowd pleaser.

Given the sheer enormity of the festival, it was impossible for every film to get a press/industry screening. Unfortunately, the system of distributing tokens to the public screenings meant that press and distributors could not necessarily get a guaranteed seat. The token system requires that everyone line up at least one hour prior to the screening and get a token. When all the tokens are distributed, the screening is sold out—no special priviledges for press or industry people. The token system of attendance was much debated, with many industry and press attendees finding it difficult to attend desired screenings.

With that in mind as a drawback, the Toronto Festival of Festivals remains an excellent festival. Although Toronto is a noncompetitive festival, this year FIPRESCI (the International Federation of Film Critics) presented a juried prize for Best First Film (justifying the addition of the First Cinema section). This prize went to *Reservoir Dogs*. There is also the People's Choice Award, in which audience members cast ballots for films they particularly enjoyed; the winner was Baz Luhrmann's *Strictly Ballroom*, an Australian film with Miramax as its distributor. A separate audience award for the favorite film from the Perspective Canada section went to Robert Morin's *Requiem pour un Beau Sans-Coeur*.

All in all, the Toronto International Film Festival of Festivals demonstrates a loyalty to its audiences, and they have responded by remaining open to a broad spectrum of film cultures, both mainstream and alternative. For instance, this year a last-minute change in the closing night gala presentation hardly caused a ripple of dissent among audiences. Woody Allen's *Husbands and Wives* was supposed to wind up the festival on September 19. But it was cancelled when Tri-Star moved the film's U.S. theatrical opening up to September 18 after the director's personal affairs started attracting headlines. Another world premiere had to be found fast. So it was decided to substitute Ron Mann's documentary *Twist*—a choice that proved to be well-respected. While not innovative or particularly insightful, *Twist* was nostalgiac and highly entertaining, with a lot of wonderful rock-and-roll and rhythm-and-blues from the 1950s and 1960s. For those of us from the United States, this was a reminder that our pop culture has entered world culture at a time when our own culture seems increasingly fragmented.



Clara Law's *Autumn Moon*.

Courtesy Film Society of Lincoln Center

Daryl Chin is a writer and curator living in New York City.

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A TAXING EXPERIENCE

Two Taxes New York City Producers Should Know About

SUSAN LEE

This article is presented only for the purpose of educating independent producers. Independent film- and videomakers should, therefore, always consult a tax consultant before undertaking any course that may have ramifications for their tax returns.

A letter comes from New York City. It says you owe $7,000 for Unincorporated Business Tax. "I'm not an unincorporated business. I'm a video artist," you say. Well, you are both an unincorporated business and a video artist. It may come as a surprise to many freelance film- and videomakers, but there are two New York City taxes that may apply to you. Although you might not owe any additional money, you may need to fill out the appropriate forms or pay a potentially stiff price in penalties.

Everyone who is in business in the City of New York and does not get paid as a W-2 employee may have to file a business tax form.

Unincorporated Business Tax

Everyone who is in business in the City of New York and does not get paid as a W-2 employee may have to file a business tax form, be it for a corporation, a partnership, or, as here, an unincorporated business. If you are a sole proprietor (e.g. make films and videos of your own, or freelance as an editor, cinematographer, etc. and get paid without taxes being taken out), which is the same as being an unincorporated business, and you either show any profit or you gross more than $10,000 a year, you must file an Unincorporated Business Tax (UBT) form yearly by April 15.

In the entertainment industry, the word "freelance" means people who are not under long-term contracts. Freelancers get paid on W-2s or 1099s. For tax purposes, "freelance" means you are not paid as an employee. The New York City Unincorporated Business Tax does not apply to money earned as an employee on a W-2 but does apply to all other earned income.

If you net less than $25,000 on your federal schedule C, you can usually opt to file the city's one-page short form, NYC 202 EZ, and you won't owe anything. A much longer and more complicated NYC 202 is for people who net more than $25,000 or who have certain modifications or allocations.

Generally, the formula for figuring out the tax is not difficult. Take the net figure from the bottom of your federal schedule C. The first thing to be subtracted is your "taxpayer services," which is 20 percent of your net figure or $5,000, whichever is lower. After this calculation, you have an automatic $5,000 exemption, which gets subtracted. Multiply the result by four percent. That number is your basic tax before credits. If the number is more than $800, there is no credit. If it's less than $600, you will get a credit of up to the number. For between $600 and $800, subtract the tax from $800 and divide that by $200 multiplied by the tax. That's your credit, which is then subtracted from the tax.

For example, Betty Editor netted $41,000 on her schedule C this year. Her 20 percent taxpayer service allowance is $8,200, which is reduced to the $5,000 maximum. $41,000 - $5,000 = $36,000. Then comes the $5,000 exemption. $36,000 - $5,000 = $31,000. That's multiplied by 4 percent or $1,240, which she owes for the year. There is no credit.

Like other federal and state income taxes, this tax must be paid quarterly. If it isn't, the city will charge interest. Curiously, although it seems like it is a business tax, it can only be taken as an expense on a schedule A on the federal tax as a personal deduction and not on a schedule C as a business expense. Further, it is not allowed as a deduction on your New York State tax.

"Nobody ever told me about this tax," you say. I'm sorry to reply that this excuse will get you nowhere. You still owe the tax. And this tax can mount up. Especially for people who have been in business for a long time. Before 1987, the cutoff for owing any Unincorporated Business Tax was $9,000 net and not the current $25,000.

Commercial Rent Tax

"I got this thing in the mail. It's for commercial property...I threw it away," you say. Commercial Rent Tax is for, among other things, any person doing business in the city who takes a rent deduction. Just because you work out of your house doesn't exempt you. The only exception is if you own property in your name. Coops are not exempt because the owner possesses stock in a corporation and not in a particular piece of property.

You owe Commercial Rent Tax if you pay more than $11,000 in business rent and work south of 96th Street in Manhattan. Working north of 96th Street or in any non-Manhattan borough gives you a 30 percent deduction. For instance, if you have an office in Queens for $12,000 a year, you owe nothing. The same rent in Manhattan gets you a six percent tax of $720. If you work at home, the "business rent" is the portion of your rent that you allocate for business, not your total rent. Begin by filling out the form on page two. You do not have to pay on residential use. You deduct the amount for that on page two.

Problems occur with subtenants of spaces where the total amount of the rent collected exceeds $11,000 but the subtenants pay less than the taxable amount. The city is determined to get its tax one way or another.

George Producer finds a great space in Tribeca for $36,000. He knows that Eleanor Agent needs a space. He's not greedy. He allocates by space and doesn't want a profit. Her rent will be $27,000 a year. She will pay six percent on her $27,000 or $1,620. He will pay nothing on his $9,000 share.

Eleanor Agent's two hottest talents jump to other agents and Eleanor decides not to renew the lease. George finds five subtenants at $6,000 each. He doesn't realize that because each of his subtenants pays less than $11,000 a year, he will be stuck for the tax on $36,000 or $2,160. George will pay his Commercial Rent Tax quarterly as he goes along in the year on forms CR-Q. His subtenants, who owe nothing, must also file the tax by sending form CR-A, but they will do so by June 20 of each year.

Even if you don't owe anything for Commercial Rent Tax, you must file. The city has a penalty of $50 for every $1,000 of rent you've deducted. If you've taken a $3,200 rent deduction, you can still get a $200 bill in the mail for the year you haven't filed.

Even if you don't owe anything for Commercial Rent Tax, you must file or pay a penalty.

This is not a tax to be ignored.

"How can the city find me?" you ask. Easily—with computers. The city has access to schedule C's from both the state and the IRS. They cross check who has filed schedule C's and UBT's or CR's. Out will come a name of someone who hasn't filed one or the other or both. A questionnaire for either the UBT or the Commercial Rent Tax will be sent out. If you fill it in and backfile your taxes, you will get a questionnaire about the other tax sooner or later. If you ignore it, you'll get a bill in the mail that may or may not bear any resemblance to what you owe but will probably scare you nonetheless. You may get such a bill even if you have filed.

If you need to communicate with the city, make sure you keep a copy of the correspondence. No matter how correct it is, the city may ignore what you've said. If they do, just send in a second copy of the communication. If this doesn't work, try calling the general information number of (718) 935-6000 and see if you can work it out over the phone. The number is the same one used to request forms. Various people, including myself, have tried to have the filing requirements for these taxes changed as well as the taxes abolished. But until the taxes are no more, it is best to pay attention to them and to file.

Susan Lee is a Soho-based tax consultant who specializes in taxation for filmmakers and individuals.

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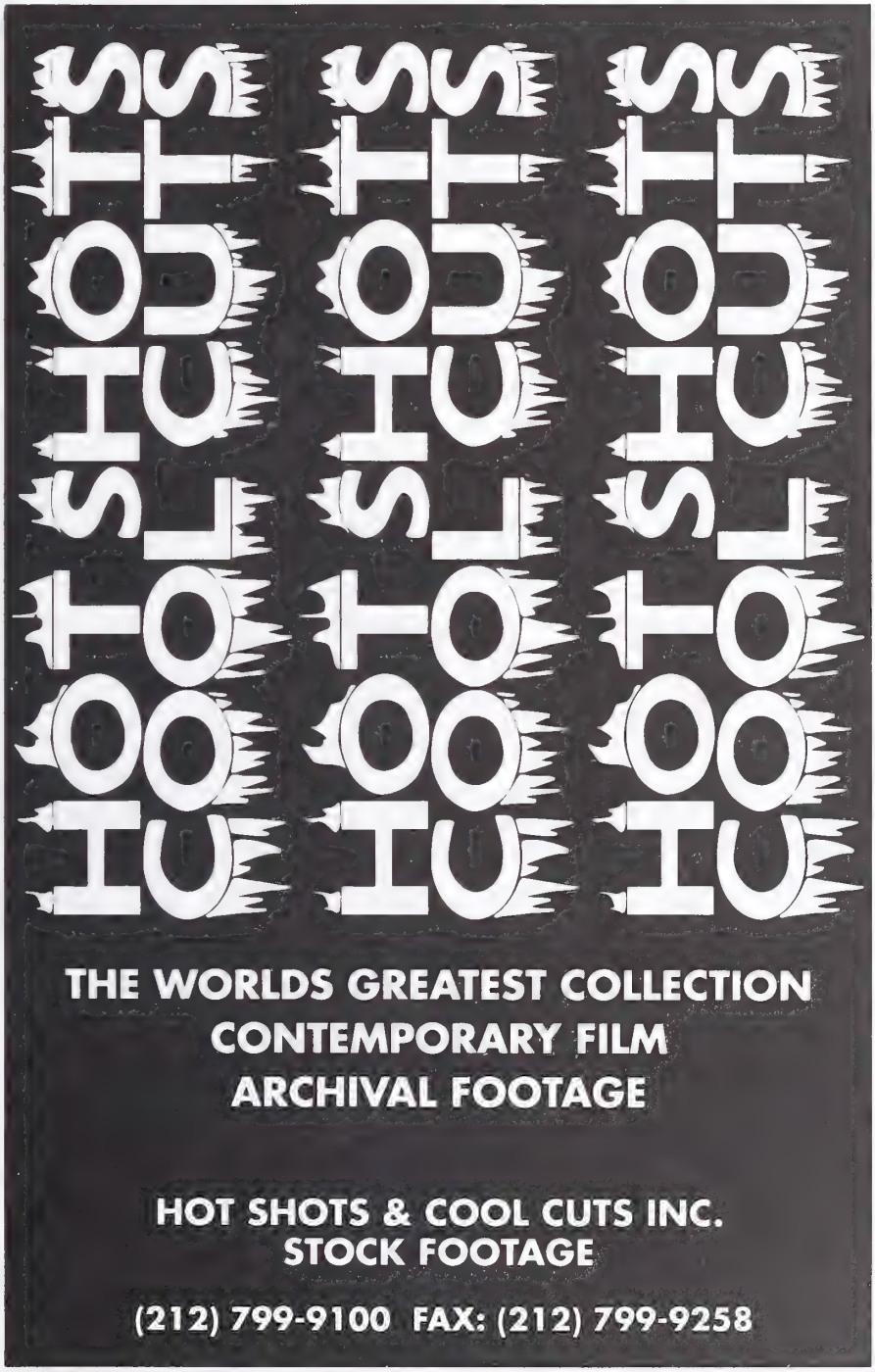
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QUEER CHOICES

How Do I Look? Queer Film and Video
Edited by Bad Object-Choices
Seattle: Bay Press, 1991; 295 pp., $16.95 (paper)

Aside from Vito Russo's entertaining and erudite *The Celluloid Closet: Homosexuality in the Movies*, very little of gay and lesbian film theory and criticism has been published in book form. This is reason enough to celebrate the publication of *How Do I Look? Queer Film and Video*, a diverse set of essays edited by Bad Object-Choices, a reading group formed in 1987 to explore questions of gay and lesbian representation. The six essays were first presented at the How Do I Look? Queer Film and Video conference, held at the Anthology Film Archives in New York City in 1989, to address the question of how gays and lesbians look at and in film and video. The conference consisted of a gay and lesbian film and video series, accompanied by the six papers and follow-up discussions, which are included in the book.

Although these essays are dense and occasionally difficult reading, the authors never forget the context and community within which they write and, in turn, create an energy and an immediacy that permeate the book. For example, in his essay "The Contemporary Political Use of Gay History: The Third Reich," Stuart Marshall explores the use of the pink triangle as a political symbol by the gay and lesbian movements and AIDS activists. Against the backdrop of a very real epidemic, Marshall argues that this usage relies on a problematic and troubling analogy between sexual identity and ethnic identity and then asks the question, "In what way are we a 'we'?" What makes us a community?

In Kobena Mercer's thoughtful essay, "Skin Head Sex Thing: Racial Difference and the Homoerotic Imaginary," Mercer reinterprets his earlier critique of the "racial fetishism" found in Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs of black male nudes by proposing a notion of ambivalence, "something that is experienced across the relations between authors, texts, and readers, relations that are always contingent, context-bound, and historically specific." One of the reasons Mercer gives for his re-vision of Mapplethorpe's images is the Far Right's 1989 attack on the National Endowment for the Arts for funding an exhibition of Mapplethorpe's work. Against this background, Mercer reexamines his own shifting relationship to the Mapplethorpe nudes. Rather than seeing Mapplethorpe's images as objectifying the black male as Other, a repetition of racist fantasies, Mercer believes the images deconstruct cultural assumptions relating to the representation of race and sexuality. "In social, economic, and political terms, black men in the United States constitute one of the 'lowest' social classes: disenfranchised, disadvantaged, and disempowered," writes Mercer. "Yet in Mapplethorpe's photographs [these men] are elevated on to the pedestal of the transcendental Western Aesthetic ideal. Far from reinforcing the fixed beliefs of the white supremacist imaginary, such a deconstructive move begins to undermine the foundational myth of the pedestal itself."

In Cindy Patton's "Safe Sex and the Pornographic Vernacular" theories of a language of pornography are discussed within the context of the real need to educate and organize communities toward safe sex practices. As Patton writes, "Theory and Practice could not be separated: Each argument about the nature of representation, the meaning of safe sex, and the modes through which community change might occur was conducted against a background of death witnessed and community destruction survived."

This never forgotten context, of a community of people working to define themselves and create their own art forms in the midst of an epidemic, in spite of attempted censorship by the NEA and attacks by the religious far right, makes these essays essential reading for anyone concerned about the relationship of image-making to gay and lesbian people. My only complaint about *How Do I Look?* is the uneven quality of some of the writing. For while these writers have reinterpreted much of academic theory to suit their needs, they have not abandoned the stultifying tradition of stiff, unreadable prose. Perhaps they could learn from the late Vito Russo, to whom this book is dedicated, that brilliance, perceptiveness, and great scholarship do not have to be embalmed in deadening language.

PAMELA SHEPERD

Pamela Sheperd is a fiction writer and movie fanatic living in Taos, New Mexico.

CULTURAL CROSSROADS

Bridge of Light:
Yiddish Film between Two Worlds
by J. Hoberman
New York: Schocken Books, 1991;
401 pp.; $40 (cloth)

"Grandpa, when I'm old, will I speak Yiddish like you?" goes the familiar joke. Actually, Yiddish is not just a language of the aged, nor is it dying off, as conventional wisdom has it. Ultra-Orthodox and Hasidic Jews continue to use Yiddish for everyday matters and to interpret religious texts.



But there was a time when Yiddish—a fusion language combining Germanic, Hebrew, Slavic, and Romance elements—was cultivated by more than this small minority. Before WWII, many thousands of Yiddish speakers patronized a lively secular culture of newspapers, books, theater, music, and the movies. J. Hoberman's *Bridge of Light: Yiddish Film between Two Worlds* is more than a chronicle of Yiddish film history on both sides of the Atlantic; it situates Yiddish cinema in its artistic and political framework.

The usual tone employed to describe Yiddish culture is elegaic and nostalgic, with sentiment often functioning as a screen for sloppy scholarship and unoriginal thought. I suspect that those who rely on this hype secretly believe that they can't interest you without it. Hoberman, however, does not snow the reader with hyperbole or the teary magnification of a lost culture. He seems genuinely involved with his topic and doesn't appear to doubt its importance as history or art, and occasionally both at once, as in the case of *The Dybbuk*, a play by An-sky, later made into a film, which draws on An-sky's ethnographic study of shtetl folklore in the White-Russian and Ukranian countryside before WWI. Hoberman compares *The Dybbuk* to Joyce's *Ulysses* and Kafka's *The Castle*, among other modernist classics. An-sky, like Marc Chagall and Martin Buber, understood that the Hasidic tradition was a rich source of artistic and spiritual power, which would impress Jews and non-Jews, believers and doubters.

Hoberman's commitment to his subject carries his readers through the complex relationships elaborated in *Bridge of Light*—of film to theater, popular culture to high art, communism to Zionism, unions to producers—for the small field of Yiddish film was located on one of the busiest intersections of the twentieth century. Socialism and nationalism won so many Jewish adherents in the late-nineteenth and twentieth centuries that it is no small task to remember all the subgroups. (I've heard of a Trotskyist sect that ended up with only two members—and then they got a divorce.)

What Hoberman has captured is the collision of aesthetic and political movements. That is why his book may well appeal to those who aren't automatically drawn to Jewish studies. In fact, I would recommend *Bridge of Light* to anyone concerned with media that attempt to speak to and for a specific community, since the issues he focuses on—like self-hatred and assimilation—are hardly confined to Jews alone. Many women and minorities will recognize the problem, which he repeatedly describes, of adopting negative stereotypes and caricatures in film.

It is Hoberman's ability to contextualize these

Isaac Julien's romantic evocation of gay love in *Looking for Langston* is among the queer films addressed in *How Do I Look? Queer Film and Video*, a diverse set of essays exploring questions of gay and lesbian representation.

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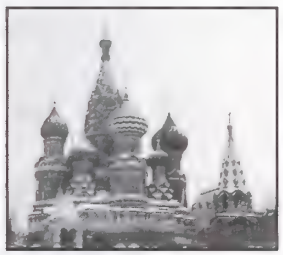
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works—to place them in a dense sociology—that makes him not just a reviewer but a cultural historian. Hoberman situates New York City's Yiddish movie houses in relation to contemporaneous venues for films in German, Hungarian, Czech, Italian, Polish, and Spanish, as well as theaters that screened all-black features. He elegantly moves from his own perspective to the views of past commentators and back again—having culled obscure periodicals and memoirs for reactions to Yiddish films. Thus his study allows the reader to encounter a variety of voices and, as they argue, a complex image of an intense little world is formed.

KAREN ROSENBERG

Karen Rosenberg is a film and literary critic who often contributes to The Women's Review of Books. *She has studied Yiddish in England and Israel.*

THE SECOND SEX AND CINEMA

Women in Film: An International Guide
Edited by Annette Kuhn with Susannah Radstone
New York: Fawcett Columbine, 1990; 500 pp; $12.95 (paper)

The idea of a film encyclopedia that focuses on women in various aspects of production, distribution, and reception is a brilliant one. This is a book that can be consulted for information on a specific director, actress, or critic, and browsed for more general reflections on movements, genres, countries, and theories. One outstanding feature of *Women in Film: An International Guide* is its willingness to treat cinema as a space where ideas interact. Entries aren't limited to portraits of personalities, regions, and genres, but also include "isms"—consumerism, eroticism, modernism, structuralism. The book leads the reader to diverse theorists, such as Roland Barthes (under "Pleasure"), Louis Althusser ("Ideology"), and Erwin Panofsky ("Iconography"), whose remarks on culture are relevant to film. I like this confidence in the intelligence and curiosity of the reader. Too often, popular discussion of the movies are anti-intellectual in the extreme, as if the darkness of the movie theater had been declared a safe haven from critical thought.

Women in Film also largely avoids the other common pitfall of cinéastes: over-reliance on clubby jargon. This volume generally manages to straddle the gap between the journalistic and the academic. Although an acquaintance with film studies and feminism will help readers plumb the depths of the relatively short entries, much prior knowledge of these fields doesn't seem to be presumed, and key terms and names are usually explained or cross-referenced.

Inclusive and ecumenical, *Women in Film* gives space to competing interpretations of women's roles. Nevertheless, an attentive reader will note that Laura Mulvey's essay, "Visual Pleasure and

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AIVF/FIVF Advancement Program Membership Survey

FIVF (Foundation for Independent Video and Film) has been awarded a National Endowment for the Arts Advancement grant. The first year of this grant will be spent taking a hard look at the organization—where we are now, where we want to be in three years—and drafting a long range plan that will get us there. We need your help. This survey is designed to help us gather information about you, your attitudes toward AIVF/FIVF and your ideas about the future direction of AIVF/FIVF. Please help us by taking a few minutes to complete and return the survey. Your input is vital in helping shape the organization you want for the future. ***Please return survey by February 15.***

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_____ 25-49%
_____ 50-74%
_____ 75-100%

Affiliation: what area(s) of independent media are you involved in?

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_____ other: _____

Where did you learn your media skills?

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_____ other: _____

What other media organizations are you a member of?

_____ American Film Institute (AFI)
_____ Black Filmmakers Foundation (BFF)
_____ Independent Documentary Association (IDA)
_____ Independent Feature Project (IFP) (specify East, West, or regional):_____
_____ National Alliance of Media Arts Centers (NAMAC)
_____ Women in Film
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_____ others (please specify): _____

In addition to this magazine, what other media publications do you *regularly* read?

_____ Variety
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relation to mediamakers & the field

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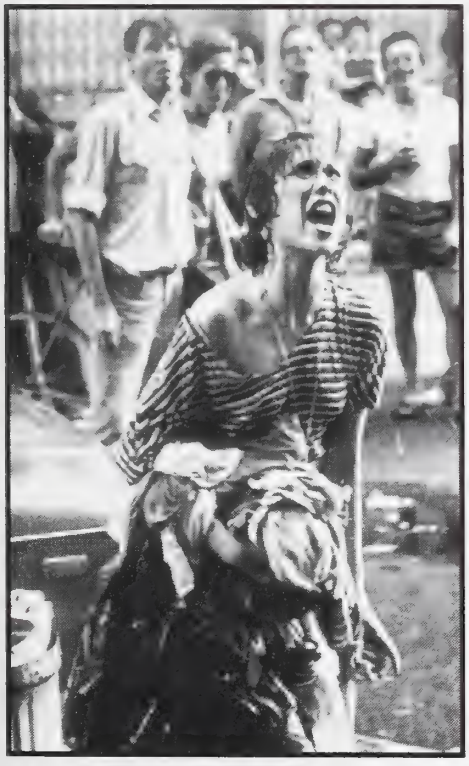
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Narrative Cinema," provides the ideational framework for many of the essays. (I only wish the authors and editors had listed a source for it other than a 1975 issue of *Screen* magazine, which is slightly less rare than hen's teeth in the U.S.) Additional sources of information are generally listed at the end of an entry. Such bibliographies and filmographies are not as long and rich as I would have liked, but their brevity may have been necessary in order to hold down the length of the book, and with it the price.

Don't be misled by the rather conventional cover. You can expect eccentric entries like "Swordplay," "Women's Revenge," and "Phallic Woman" in this encyclopedia. Lesbian and nonwhite perspectives are included in so many articles that they were obviously an integral part of the plan, not an afterthought. Hollywood gets a fair amount of attention, in part because of the recent tendency to find ambivalence and even subversive tendencies in dominant cinema. (I'm not as convinced as some theorists that "womanliness" is a masquerade that can be dropped at will and suspect this peacemaking with traditional notions of femininity may reflect the conservatism of the eighties.) Yet independents don't receive the short end of the stick, and it seems that most authors chose subjects they could write about with enthusiasm as well as authority.

Film and feminism develop rapidly, and this encyclopedia may soon need updating. But for the time being it provides an intelligent, sophisticated, and readable introduction to many aspects of women in film.

KAREN ROSENBERG



From Susan Seidelman's *Desperately Seeking Susan.*

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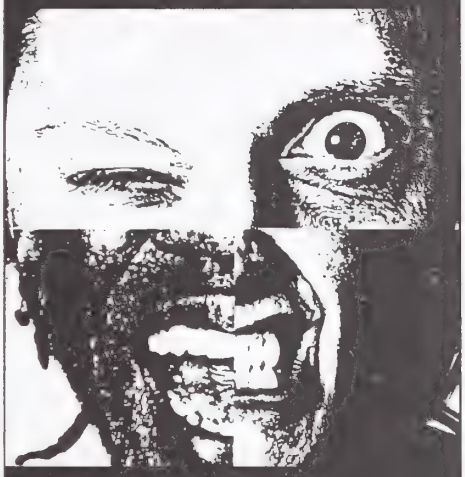
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INSIDE THE CLINTON CAMPAIGN
WAR ROOM
WITH CHRIS HEGEDUS AND D.A. PENNEBAKER

BY PATRICIA THOMSON

Two weeks before the 1992 Democratic convention, film partners/spouses D. A. Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus were approached by Wendy Ettinger, a casting director, and R.J. Cutler, a theater director and now film student at UCLA, to create a film on the presidential election. Ettinger and Cutler had seen and admired Pennebaker's earlier work on the political process: Primary *(1960), the ground-breaking verité film on the Wisconsin primary contest between Hubert Humphrey and the still-obscure Senator John Kennedy, and* Crisis *(1963), in which the filmmakers had unparalleled access to JFK and Attorney General Robert Kennedy during the tense showdown with Governor George Wallace over the desegregation of the University of Alabama.*

Cutler and Ettinger managed to finesse press passes to the convention on short notice. With that, the project was on, with Cutler and Ettinger producing, and Hegedus and Pennebaker forming the core camera team, supplemented by Judy Carp, Nick Doob, and David Dawkins at the convention, backstage during the debates, and outside the Governor's Mansion in Little Rock on election night.

Initially the filmmakers considered tracking all the candidates. But by the end of the convention their focus became clear: the Clinton campaign, as seen from inside its nerve center. Specifically, they honed in on two key players: James Carville, Clinton's chief political strategist, and the 31-year-old communications director, George Stephanopoulos. Their center of operation, and the site of Clinton's much-vaunted "quick response" team, was "the war room." Thus was born The War Room, *now in postproduction.*

★ "The economy, stupid"

Independent: How was the Clinton campaign's war room different from any other campaign headquarters?

Chris Hegedus: It seems that James Carville really created the war room idea, although war rooms have existed at conventions. But extending the war room idea throughout the whole campaign was something that Carville decided to do.

The way the war room functioned—this huge room with Carville at a large table in the middle surrounded by desks—was really very extraordinary. The type of access that people could get to James Carville and George Stephanopoulos was very unusual in a campaign. Normally those people have to go through appointments, if you're a low-down staffer and have some kind of idea. But in their campaign, it functioned the opposite. They wanted everybody's input.

James said in reflection about the room that a lot of campaigns function as administrations where you throw in a little creativity. They functioned as a creative unit and had administration just to keep it manageable. Also,

James Carville, mastermind behind the war room and Clinton's chief campaign strategist, wearing his lucky gloves during the final stretch.

Photo: Wendy Ettinger

James would always say things like, how would he be able to tell his message to 250-million voters if he can't even explain his ideas to 250 staffers? That was the approach of that campaign, and that room was unusual for campaigns.

There's another room called the boiler room that's right below it. That was where the computers were hooked up to all the places across the United States and the multitude of armies. It would connect with the polls and that type of information.

Independent: What goes on in the war room?

D.A. Pennebaker: The people in there are the quick response team. And those people are taking extraordinary risks. They're sitting in a room, watching Bush's speech on TV. There are three TV sets in there, all tuned to different stations. Bush will say something, and a guy has to think what the answer is. Fifty people are all around him. He'll get two or one to go out and research it and find out the last eight times Bush said that. In other words, they're fabricating Clinton's remarks before Clinton even hears him.

Every night they have a 6:30 meeting. Some guy comes in and reads them the news, which they've seen variously through the day. Then they'll have various people report. One person is reporting on Hillary, and another is reporting on what's happening out on the campaign bus.

Hegedus: It's a very strange, obtuse thing. All they do is react to everything that goes on in the world, basically. From whatever happened, they decide a strategy and vocalize an opinion that can be encapsulated into some kind of slogan—like the change thing, or the economy. They just try to find the issues and talk around them as much as they can.

Independent: It sounds very reactive. Did they have an underlying masterplan or a three-point or five-point strategy that gave cohesion to all the quick responses they needed to make on a day-to-day basis? Or was it completely by the seat of their pants?

Hegedus: Certainly they had a plan, with issues like health care. But a lot of it was by the seat of their pants. As they went along, they found certain things that would work, and [those things] became the slogans you read about. Like "The economy, stupid," which was always something that was scribbled on the blackboard in the room. They were like the daily mottos on the blackboard. Change was another one. When they hooked onto that, that became the next battle cry. So I think they just picked these large, very important issues out, and those were parts of their plan. I don't think they thought them up three months ago.

I could see them thinking up the change one, which Jerry Brown was using also at the convention. But since he was not going to be following the process much longer, they took it on as their own. And we were filming with them when they were developing that: "This is really working, this idea is getting people to look at us." And they started using it more and more.

Independent: How did you get into the war room? Who did Wendy Ettinger and R.J. Cutler have to convince?

Hegedus: George Stephanopoulos. He's in charge of whatever strategy happens with publicity, communications, within the whole campaign. He was the final decisionmaker. We didn't even really know who James Carville was at that point. We were totally blind; we didn't know what faces went to what names. George was the deciding factor. But we weren't asking him to do what we ended up doing. We were asking him for a lot more in the beginning. We were asking to make a film about Clinton. He said no.

Independent: So Stephanopoulos redirected your focus to Carville?

Hegedus: No, we asked him if we could film with Carville, because in the convention we realized that Carville was an important spokesperson for the campaign. And we realized we were not going to have access to Bill Clinton.

Independent: Why not?

Hegedus: It was decided early on with George that we couldn't have access to him. There was a guy writing a book about Clinton, who'd been with him since New Hampshire. And there's a *Time* photographer who's been with him the whole time. And he just felt it was very stressful. At that point, Stephanopoulos felt he couldn't ask him; he just couldn't do it. And so we changed a lot of the focus of our film to Carville and behind the scenes. Which was fine, because there's a real story there.

Independent: What is the story, as you see it?

Hegedus: It's about people trying to do something that's very important to them, which is elect this man President, and watching them go through a major ordeal and be successful. And do something that I don't think any of them thought they were going to be able to do, because there were so many problems with Clinton in the beginning: Gennifer Flowers, the draft issue all along. I think it was a total shock to all of them that they really did it. That's the story we have so far—watching these people do it.

Pennebaker: I think [the shift from Clinton to Clinton's advisors] is a better film. But we didn't know that going in. So in a way, we were kind of lead from where we thought we were going to where things were interesting.

We had a mike usually on Carville, because they'd go off into a little huddle. We didn't put one on George, because he was going back into a room where there were people who weren't sympathetic at all [to our film project]. So it came to me after a while that what we were making, whether we wanted to or not, was a film in the war room. Instead of trying to get all the access you could, you just said, "I'll make one where there's the least access. I'll find the center of the place and see only what happens there."

You see people in various stages of exhilaration or depression as things go up and down. There may be 50 people in this room. In the middle is a big, long table that Carville stands by. And George is in there every five minutes, and the two of them are saying, "What do we do about this?"

What interests me is seeing the response of these two people. They're guiding the campaign like generals guide a war: every day you get a phone call saying, "They just bombed out the third fleet." So you've got to figure out where to get another fleet. You're working totally off the cuff all the time. And that's why you meet people who have that kind of ability and not people who say, "Now here's a masterful campaign strategy," because there is no such thing.

Independent: Were there limitations placed on what you could record?

Pennebaker: No, no.

Hegedus: The limitations were access. And we didn't have unlimited access.

George Stephanopoulos (left) and James Carville contemplate their next move.

Photo: © 1992 David Burnett, courtesy Contact Press Images

Independent: What didn't you have access to?

Hegedus: We didn't have access to Clinton, basically.

Pennebaker: If Clinton came into the room, we could film him. But we couldn't go in and get time with him. That's reserved for High Press.

Hegedus: If we had wanted to ask for time to interview him, we could probably have done that. But that's not really what we were interested in. We're hoping that, because the end of our story with George and James will end up being with Governor Clinton, that he'll be a part of our film in another way than he has been. The way we've looked at him has been a little bit more than the press has, with the exception of the debates; we filmed backstage with him.

★ Pack journalism

Independent: Were you the only press given access to the war room?

Pennebaker: Nobody else is ever allowed in the war room.

Hegedus: We were barely allowed.

Pennebaker: Somebody said they were doing a show for Little Rock TV....

Hegedus: No, it was for CNN. They were touring the Clinton-Gore headquarters, and they wanted to go in the war room. And they ask, "What's so special about the war room?" George says, "It's special because you're not allowed there."

Independent: Did you, as documentarians, have difficulty distinguishing yourselves from the regular press in how the campaign staff received you?

Pennebaker: You don't do the same thing they do. For example: they have these human walls with cameras that go up 10 feet in the air and are maybe 20- or 30-feet long. It's like they're made of some kind of compressed material of people with cameras. And they all have identical cameras—all Japanese—and identical mike booms, with little furry mops on the end. It's like watching a medieval battle, seeing these people running around with these gigantic booms, chasing each other. You realize you're watching maybe $100,000 or $200,000 invested so all the world can watch Clinton walk out of a door. That's all they do.

I'm standing in front of them. George and Carville are there. Perot has just decided to come back in, or he's made some speech. They're doing these wonderful imitations of Perot. They're getting off on it, and they're giggling away and whispering little things into each other's ears—which we can get, because we have them wired with mikes. So I'm filming them, and every once in a while I look at this wall, and the wall is looking straight ahead, like it isn't happening. Because nobody's come out of the door. That's what their job is—getting Clinton coming out of the door. Then it all gets put to tape, and goes out into the world, and everybody sees Clinton that day coming through a door.

So this is what the press sees itself as doing. When I tell this to George, and I'm kind of laughing about it, he says, "Well, I'm glad that's all they're doing. Because if they were doing what you're doing, it would be impossible. We couldn't operate."

★ The players

Independent: How did the job responsibilities of Carville and Stephanopoulos divide up?

Hegedus: George is like the Marlin Fitzwater of the campaign. He actually gets out there and is the political spokesperson for Clinton when a message coming from Bill's mouth through George's has to go out to the world. He's official in that way. James is like the unauthorized biography. He can say whatever he wants to say—be slanderous or whatever. And he won't get criticism, because he's not the official mouth of Bill Clinton.

Together, they definitely were an amazing force in mounting a type of personal energy center that made that campaign really work.

Independent: Where would Clinton come into play in framing the agenda and strategies of the campaign?

Hegedus: Clinton never comes physically into play. He's always a person on the telephone. He's flying somewhere every day of his campaign, practically. They talked to him on the phone, and would tell him their opinions. Paul [Begala, Carville's partner,] and James talk on the phone all the time.

Independent: So Begala was not in Little Rock?

Hegedus: He's on the plane all the time with Clinton, and James is mounting this kind of energy center.

Independent: How about people like campaign manager Mickey Kantor, media advisor Mandy Grunwald, and pollster Stan Greenberg? Did you get to these people? Were they willing to be on film?

Hegedus: We filmed all of them during the convention. In terms of access afterwards, George was very afraid we would disrupt the work of other people. He wanted us just to focus on James, which we did. But then everyone has to come talk to James. So you get all the people that way. For a long time, we didn't really wander over to Stan's desk, which was really just over there in the corner. Later we went and filmed him. But anything that he had to say, he'd come and report to James. So you get the most important things anyway just by sticking with James and doing what George had asked.

Same with George. George would come running in, and together they'd deal with whatever looming crisis they had. During the last part, we filmed with everybody in George's office, whatever we wanted. But we did respect [the restrictions] for a while, because we wanted the access.

Mandy Grunwald in the beginning was not particularly fond of us, because she had her own communications/commercial realm of filmmaking that she was involved with. We didn't really have anything to offer her. Our program wasn't going to come out until after the election, and it did the candidate no good. It only seemed like we were a pain being there. So she was not very supportive.

Independent: Was she obstructive? Or was anybody?

Hegedus: I'm sure she was vocal. She was vocal to our face that she wasn't very pleased we were there. But in the end she was very friendly and very nice to us. So I think after a while people start being able to see things in



terms of history, and not just the particular moment, and realize that we weren't really there to make some kind of backstabbing, foolish portrayal of them.

Mickey Kantor was very helpful to us in the war room at the convention—to a certain point. And then he got so worried when Perot dropped out of the race that he had a minor freak-out, and we were dismissed from the convention war room.

★ The *Primary* legacy

Independent: How would you compare the campaign process nowadays to that in 1960, during the Kennedy-Humphrey primary? How has it changed?

Pennebaker: Well, it hasn't changed fundamentally. They're all trying to do some kind of personality job on the local people—the crowds of people and the local politicians they depend on to keep the thing moving. They have to show they're kind of matinee idols, so there's that need constantly to be performing in some way, but it's such a strange performance. And that has hardly changed at all. For instance, there's the need to be seen going into a church. It doesn't matter—you can go in and piss on the floor—but you have to be seen going *into* the church. You have to be seen doing a number of things, because it's required that you reach all of this very broad electorate. So the amount of real reality that's allowed is very small. And I think it was the same with Kennedy.

Independent: I want to read you a quote that Richard Leacock said about *Primary*, which he, Robert Drew, Al Maysles, and Terrence McCartney Filgate worked on with you. "*Primary* in no way achieved what I, at least, wanted to achieve. I wanted to see the political process at work, and we saw only the public aspects of the problem. There was no chance of our being privy to the real discussions that took place with the statisticians, with the public relations people, which is where modern politics operates. No one has ever got that on film or, with our present system, ever will. There's much more chance of getting someone fucking on film than of getting politicians being honest."

It seems that what you're attempting to capture now with *The War Room* is precisely what Leacock said you missed in *Primary*: you're following the campaign managers around, who presumably are among the key people holding the "real discussions."

Pennebaker: I doubt, though, that we're getting to very high level discussions. But you don't know. I think that far less is determined by privileged and reasonable discussions than is determined by luck, chance, and who happens to be someplace when a reporter with an open mike says, "What do you think?"

Our problem is to be there with people who like and trust us, over a long enough range of time, so that they'll bring to the film—which they will—whatever it is that they think the film should know.

Hegedus: We did a film on the political process 12 years ago, a five-hour series called *The Energy War*. [*Ed. note:* This three-part series, which aired on PBS, chronicles one of the longest legislative battles ever—the 18-month



Bill and Hillary in North Carolina on the Clintons' final bus tour.

Photo: Chris Hegedus

struggle over President Carter's 1977 National Energy Plan. The verité film traces the volatile course of the energy bill as it moves through Congress, being shaped, filibustered, influenced, and retooled by senators, aides, lobbyists, the President, and James Schlesinger in the then-newly created Cabinet post of Secretary of Energy.]

Independent: I found that series fascinating, because, more than any film I've seen, it gets at what Leacock was talking about, which is the real process of how government works.

Hegedus: This does, too. Because it shows the decisions on a campaign—whatever you think of as the high level positions; maybe you think only dealing with the finances is high level—but we *are* watching the strategies getting shaped. That is half of the focus of the campaign. I think that we're watching a lot of it happen. It looks very informal.

★ "The old boy net"

Pennebaker: The last segment of *The Energy War* is so interesting, because it's all Schlesinger. And it shows the way it really gets done, where he turns to us—we're in his office—and he says, "This is the old boy net." He's got all these Republican friends, he's wringing their arms to make them vote for Carter's bill. This is the only way they got the bill through. In the end, I think that [Senator Russell] Long told us, "Carter is not going to get a second term, and he's never going to know why. But we know why. It's because of this energy bill."

In the beginning Schlesinger didn't want us there at all. We sent him *Crisis*, then went to Washington and were told maybe he'd see us. We went over to the office and were told, "No, he's too busy." So we went out to a movie. Suddenly in the middle of the movie, this voice on the loudspeaker says, "Mr. Pennebaker, the White House would like you to come." I jumped out of my seat! We went over there and sat down in his office. When he came out he said, "You're Pennebaker, huh? Well, I know who you people are: you're snoops. I don't want you around."

So we were a little depressed. But we kept shooting. We would have to sneak around and hide behind the furniture. In those days you couldn't get into the Senate. But we had some friends who would let us sit in their office. They had TV sets, so we could watch the House votes and shoot off the TV screen. So little by little, more of these guys—Senator DeConcini and people—would come to us and tell us something, or tell us when something was going to happen.

Finally, we chase Schlesinger out to Los Angeles to a big meeting. I filmed him making a speech. Then afterwards we got in the elevator, and he came in and said, "You guys don't give up, do you?" Then he said, "Okay, I'll tell you what. Come down to the house." And he had this wonderful little house. It was like anybody's house out in Scarsdale, or wherever, bikes all over the lawn, the place looked like hell. And you thought, "This is a real person living here." He used to take us in his limousine out to the office and tell us what was going on. He became such a friend that, in the very end, he took us into the Senate cloakroom so we could record off the PA system, where no press was ever allowed, so we could get the final vote. *He* decided. I never asked him why. But I know that, like Kennedy, he suddenly perceived that what we were getting was something that nobody else would ever bother to do. And it intrigued him. So by the end of the film, when we were sitting in his office and he was making all these calls, he turns to Chris and says, "the old boy net" right on the film. And there he is, calling these people one by one, and that's how the vote got through. So you can see, Carter never knew how he got that vote. And in a way, Schlesinger was finding a way to tell us how it worked. That really fascinated me. The good guys will always do that. That's what history means to them—to understand how it works. Because most people haven't a clue.

Independent: So what are the motives of Stephanopoulos and Carville?

Hegedus: I don't know. It always surprises me. I never understand why people let us film them, because I hate to be filmed so much. But people do see some reason for showing this, for people to see this process. And George, I was really touched, said the nicest thing to me on the day of the election, which was that he was so happy we had not given up and had continued to make this film, even though he wasn't being very helpful to us along the way. He was helpful to a point, but he was scared. His job was on the line. It's a lot of responsibility. We weren't really necessary to the process.

Pennebaker: By [the end of the convention], everybody had made choices about us that mattered. You could feel the sides forming. George, Carville, and maybe a half-dozen other people really helped us. That's what always happens. It's a way of leaking; it's like in Washington. It isn't that they like us so much; we're a way of getting some kind of information out that they think isn't getting out.

They also had an interest in the historical aspects of it. I think George does. They understand what we mean by history, and we don't mean history in the traditional sense, maybe. But they start to see what interests us, and they think, "That will be interesting, too, 10 years from now." And for them that's history: to be able to see what they're doing, from some kind of distance, some kind of outside position.

And there's nobody else doing that. What's going on the news—people walking out doors—is not really history.

This article combines two interviews, conducted on October 28 and November 9, 1992, at the New York offices of Pennebaker Associates, Inc. Background research provided by Larry Jaffee.

Independents Lose Out on Election Coverage

There's no doubt about it: television played a more central role than ever in this year's presidential election. From Bill Clinton's bus ride through the heartland to Ross Perot's incessant infomercials, the cameras captured every inch of terrain along the rocky campaign trail.

Nineteen ninety-two could have been a banner year for independent producers covering the election as well, according to Alvin H. Perlmutter, an independent producer whose two *Voices of the Electorate* specials aired on the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). One philanthropic organization, the Markle Foundation, planned to hand PBS $5-million for election coverage, much of which would have been earmarked for independent productions. But PBS and Markle had a falling out, and the deal was cancelled. Subsequently, the several independents fortunate enough to have their programs aired found themselves grappling with censorship issues.

Because 1988's election coverage was even more lackluster than its candidates, Perlmutter had devoted two years following the race to conducting a major feasibility study for the Markle Foundation. The study addressed public television's potential role in enhancing the quality of discourse about candidates in 1992 and invited recommendations from independent producers as well as media advisors, political insiders, and academics. Titled *The Voter's Channel*, Perlmutter's final report made several suggestions, which included offering relatively unfettered airtime to candidates and parties, involving Americans in a dialogue with the candidates, and launching an extensive promotional campaign to highlight the role of public broadcasting in the election process.

Markle put its money where its recommendations were by offering PBS $5-million to carry out the project. PBS committed $3-million. Although Lloyd N. Morrisett, president of the Markle Foundation, estimated that $12- to $16-million was necessary, he was confident he could recruit funders to make up the difference.

In June 1991, however, a disgruntled Morrisett sent a letter to 100 people involved with the project announcing the foundation's decision to split from PBS. The letter cited PBS's unwillingness to fully commit to the project and the fact there was no agreed-upon program plan as two reasons for the split. Ultimately, the foundation entered into a $3.5-million contract with Cable News Network and, due to time constraints, *The Voters' Channel* project was more or less scrapped.

The announcement was a severe blow for independents, Perlmutter says, because "part of the plan entailed enlisting the services of independent producers and stations. I received more than 100 proposals and had intended to commission several of them."

Instead, independent producers, including Perlmutter, were on their own. He chose to focus on minority voters and, as director of the Independent Production Fund, organized town meetings for Blacks and Latinos in 10 U.S. cities. The meetings resulted in two one-hour *Voices of the Electorate* specials, which combined footage from the meetings with documentary footage and provided time for the Presidential candidates to respond. Perlmutter says although the specials aired on PBS, the $1-million project was funded primarily by the Carnegie and MacArthur Foundations.

Arnie Labaton, executive director of PBS's Election '92, says the programs that received joint funding from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and PBS were three election-related episodes of *The '90s* series, Bill Moyers' *Listening to America* (which received a challenge grant), *America's Political Parties: Power and Principle*, a two-part special produced by Manifold Productions, and *Power, Politics & Latinos*, produced by the National Latino Communications Center in Los Angeles. In other instances, he adds, money was given to producing stations and later dispersed to independents, as was the case with WETA-TV's *Why Bother Voting?* special, produced by Karen Katz.



Bob Hercules (right), a Chicago-based videographer, produced a segment on the Republican Convention for *The 90's* series, which included several heated exchanges between San Francisco street performer-turned-reporter Stony Burke (left) and Republican delegates.

Photo: Bill Stamets, courtesy Bob Hercules

Perlmutter says PBS gave no specific reason for not funding *Voices of the Electorate*, the last vestiges of his proposal to the Markle Foundation, but when it came time for the specials to air, PBS was quick to play surgeon to an unwilling patient. Three days prior to the first special's September airdate, PBS programming executives ordered speeches by Democratic candidate Bill Clinton cut out of both specials because they were deemed "inappropriate" without a similar message from President Bush, who had refused the offer to supply a speech. Given the option of axing Clinton's response or having the special pulled, Perlmutter was forced to comply with PBS's requests. "I decided my obligation to the minority groups was too strong," he says.

Voices of the Electorate was not the only PBS special to get the knife days before it aired. Bob Hercules, a Chicago-based videographer, produced a segment on the Republican Convention for *The 90's* series, which included several heated exchanges between San Francisco street performer-turned-reporter Stony Burke and Republican officials. Claiming the program, which also featured subdued footage from the Democratic Convention that was not shot by Hercules, was unbalanced, executives at Chicago public T.V. station WTTW called a meeting with series producers Joel Cohen and TomWeinberg. Faced with an ultimatum similar to Perlmutter's, the producers agreed to snipping three segments that particularly troubled the presenting station: Burke facing off with New York Senator Alphonse D'Amato, Oliver North, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Jack Kemp. Just how heated were the exchanges? During the sparring match between Burke and D'Amato, Burke called the senator "a high-priced politician who perpetuates the system" and D'Amato, in turn, labeled the reporter "a jackass." Burke was no kinder when he asked North if he was "a born-again Christian" because he "felt bad about 10,000 dead Nicaraguans from the CIA war" that he led.

Had they not made the cuts, WTTW would have taken its credits off the program and it would not have been fed it to the PBS satellite for national broadcast. Copies of the revised show went to critics with a note saying to disregard the previous version.

"This is not an issue of censorship," WTTW's Bruce Marcus, senior vice president for corporate marketing and communications, told the press. But Hercules disagrees. "I have never encountered such a blatant act of censorship," he says. Both Hercules and Perlmutter say that "balance" is no justification for censorship, and although the 1992 campaign is history, film- and videomakers should be aware that the battle to preserve uncut versions of their work is far from over.

MICHELE SHAPIRO



Do Environmental Films Help the Environment? Here Are Some That Have

KAREN HIRSH

THERE MAY BE NO ENVIRONMENTAL NETWORK ON U.S. TELEVISION, BUT there is a network of environmentalists making extraordinary television, video, and film. This kind of media isn't trying to sell you anything other than a voice in the debate about the future of the planet. It is produced for the express purpose of getting you off the sofa and into the political process by clamoring for a cleaner planet. And it is working.

Sometimes when well-funded and well-organized activist-producers document environmental destruction for the first time, the documentation stops the problem. The international environmental organization Greenpeace, for instance, has achieved a good deal of notoriety and success over the past 20 years sending camera crews around the globe—into the middle of the ocean filming whale hunts, to the bottom of the world documenting pollution in Antarctica, and underneath the sea capturing the murderous impact of driftnets. The power of these images has been essential in moving the public to call for an end to commercial whaling, international protection for Antarctica, and a U.N. ban on driftnet fishing.

Today, with the accessibility and low cost of camcorders, anyone anywhere can be a camcorder vigilante for the environment. All one needs is information, patience, chutzpah, and a commitment to getting the word out by every means necessary for as long as it takes. The same dedication to the mighty strength of the visual that Greenpeace used to save the whales is now being used by concerned citizens to shut down local polluters in towns across America. But the impact of environmental films and videos is manifest not only when a plant closes or a fisherman brings in his net. Environmental films and videos have a more subtle and no less powerful effect when they inspire people to join the fight.

The following portraits of impassioned activist-producers demonstrate the vast potential for independent film and video to galvanize public opinion on the environment. A common thread unites this diverse group—which ranges from citizens shooting wobbly VHS footage to award-winning filmmakers. Each discovered film or video out of a burning desire to speak on behalf of the planet. They raised their voices and learned filmmaking along the way. The success of their films speaks to the strength of their instincts and the potential for independent video- and filmmaking to be one of the most valuable tools of the environmental movement.

♣ *Solo vigilantes*

Brenda LiveOak, a computer technician by day and environmental activist by night, did not mean to shut down a Minnesota coke plant with her camcorder. She only wanted the 25-year-old company to stop spewing thick, black smoke into the sky. Trained through an EPA-sponsored course on air quality monitoring, she knew without question that the harmful smoke from the plant directly across the street from a predominantly African American neighborhood had violated air quality standards for years. When state environmental officials ignored her complaints, LiveOak decided to put her camera to work. She invited Alex Sagady, an environmental health expert with the American Lung Association, to help her make a videotape of the spewing plant. "I wanted to do this video and I knew how I wanted to do it," says LiveOak. "By bringing in a large group like that, I knew the video would gain credibility." LiveOak and Sagady met at the

Courtesy Greenpeace

plant and got the necessary video, despite harassment by plant officials who put their hands in front of her lens and tried to chase them from the plant.

LiveOak knew exactly what she needed to make her case: 30 minutes of solid evidence, according to state law. She also knew what to do with the tape. She rigged up two VCRs in her living room, made 18 dubs, and mailed them to every member of the Michigan Air Pollution Commission. Upon viewing the tape, the commission found the evidence of the plant's air quality violations to be irrefutable. They ordered the facility to obtain proper pollution control equipment. When the company said it could not afford to comply with the law, they closed the aging plant.

Other grassroots environmental activists have discovered that when it comes to publicizing environmental destruction, the American media machine can be successfully exploited. Terry Moore is one such activist. This Indiana woman broke the story of refrigerated trucks from the East Coast carrying garbage to Midwest landfills, then returning with food bound for East Coast supermarkets. Her video appeared on *ABC Nightly News*, *Donahue*, the *MacNeil/Lehrer NewsHour*, and numerous local broadcasts. Her story also appeared in *Bearing Witness: Homemade Tapes from the Environmental Front*, a half-hour program about video activists for the environment, cablecast on access channels through Deep Dish Television. In *Bearing Witness* Moore speaks about the important role of video in her publicity campaign: "In dealing with the news media, just a small amount of footage can say a lot. Without the video, I don't think our message would have gotten out."

But while a few seconds of video brought Moore fame and grabbed the attention of the public, her tape played a more important utilitarian role in her fight at the state capitol. Though the public was disgusted by the image of garbage-stained trucks hauling food, Moore's real goal was to prevent East Coast states—too crowded and polluted to build more landfills—from dumping on their Midwest neighbors. Moore and the Dump Patrol, a group of 75 concerned citizens (in a town of just 250 people) documented on video and in print every out-of-state truck entering their local landfill for 60 hours per week for 14 months. After years of lobbying with their video evidence, Moore and the Dump Patrol convinced state officials to pass legislation regulating out-of-state waste. The impact of their tape proves the power of video to persuade—whether it is used behind the scenes with the state legislature or presented publicly in the glare and glitter of a syndicated talk show.





Terry Moore's video broke the story on the national networks of refrigerated trucks from the East Coast carrying garbage to Midwest landfills, then returning with food bound for East Coast supermarkets.

Courtesy videomaker

♣ *The professors' cottage industry*

The unlikely match of incinerator battles and videotape is the raw materials for a cottage industry of sorts created by two New England university instructors. On Thanksgiving weekend in 1985, Dr. Paul Connett, a professor of chemistry at St. Lawrence University, asked Roger Bailey, an instructor in drawing and printmaking, to drive across New England and videotape a big pile of incinerator ash. Although both men were veterans of an incinerator battle in their hometown, neither knew anything about video. But they believed the story of this polluting ash landfill had to be told. They drove for hours, slept on the floor of local activists' homes, and the next morning taped interviews with concerned citizens and shot shaky footage of contaminated water from the toxic landfill running into a nearby stream.

That weekend begot a production company, Video Active Productions. Seven years later, the company is vital and is funded solely by revenue from sales of the 31 titles produced since 1985. With these videos, Paul Connett and Roger Bailey have arguably provided more information to grassroots environmental groups about the issue of waste disposal than any organization in the world.

Their tapes, entitled the *Works on Waste* series (edited in and distributed from Bailey's attic) are a genre unto themselves. Each features Connett on-camera putting into plain English detailed technical information about waste disposal, mixing it with on-screen reporting at the sites of the world's best and worst waste facilities, and adding a good dose of stand-up comedy in his thick British accent.



For Connett and Bailey, it is a labor of love to create videos for "little Davids" around the world, like these activists in East Liverpool, Ohio, site of one of the nation's largest commercial waste incinerators.

Courtesy Greenpeace

Their unconventional style is not well reflected in the inauspicious and bland titles of the tapes: *Two Views of Hazardous Waste Incineration from Biebesheim, Germany*; *Warren County's Incinerator: The Wrong Model for New Jersey*; and *Millie Zantow: Recycling Pioneer*. These tapes are not intended for popular consumption at the video store. Rather, they are a critique of the wasteful ways of today's consumers. In *Waste Management as if the Future Mattered*, Connett, gesticulating dramatically, holds up a disposable razor and says: "I remember watching a half-naked woman on TV sitting on the hood of a Mercedes Benz and thinking, 'If I bought this I'd get her, the car, and a trip to Bermuda.' I didn't believe this, except my subconscious did. And the next time I was in the supermarket, I heard the waves splashing in my brain and I reached for the plastic razors. Maybe it's not a trash crisis after all. Maybe it's a sexual crisis. Maybe we have to keep buying these things and throwing them away because it gives us some kind of sexual orgasm or something."

It's not every chemist-turned-activist who can work the word "orgasm" into a schtick about plastic and elicit laughs. The tapes' audience—the grassroots audience—loves them not only for their humor. Activists devour the information and use the well-documented horror stories of poorly managed facilities to galvanize public opinion against unwanted plants at home.

Video Active Productions does not let conventional concerns about copyright interfere with distribution. From December 1985 to November 1992, the company sold 4,454 tapes—an impressive total in itself. In addition Bailey and Connett encourage people to duplicate the tapes as often as needed. Bailey receives several calls a month from activists who want to reproduce tapes. One caller, upon hearing confirmation of the liberal copyright policy, said, "Good. Because I'm making 400 copies and giving them away." Demand from the front for one tape—a gruesome inside look at work conditions inside a medical waste incinerator—was so great and so immediate that Bailey never finished editing it, and to this day he distributes the rough cut.

The tapes give activists the technical information to pursue their local struggles while drawing strength from the knowledge and experience of activists in other parts of the world. When activists hear the stories of people living in the shadow of other facilities or the success of a recycling program, they lose the feeling of working in isolation. One viewer wrote: "Received your tape this afternoon and immediately slipped it into the VCR... What comes to mind while watching [your] film was a battlefield with our forces dug in. We had lots of troops and adequate weapons. What we lacked most was ammo. And lo and behold the ammo arrived. Yes, little David is going to take on Goliath."

For both Connett and Bailey, it is a labor of love to create videos for "little Davids" around the world. They scramble to cover the costs of production (which average less than $2,000 per video) as well as costs for duplication and distribution. In 1991, their peak year so far, they generated $25,000 in tapes sales, almost exactly what they had spent. Bailey has used some of the income to upgrade their equipment from VHS to a Hi8 camera and three-quarter-inch editing equipment.

Connett started a newsletter for activists the year before founding Video Active Productions, but he soon turned to video because, "It wasn't enough just to write it down." In his passionate dedication to furthering grassroots activism, he spends all his free time on the road, rallying the troops and persuading Bailey to forego fine-tuning the tapes to get them out the door and to "the front" as fast as possible. Bailey, who functions as videographer, editor, and producer, turned to video out of dissatisfaction with the opportunities available to voice his opinion in his own local battle against an incinerator. Although the artist in him craves more time to improve the quality of the tapes, the activist says with both resignation and pride, "The citizens don't want Eisenstein's editing. They want the stuff in two days so they can make their argument. It changes the definition of doing something well. We're doing it well simply by getting the tapes to them when they need them."

Bailey summarized the philosophy behind their homespun productions in a recent lecture: "My notion of independent video, as opposed to commercial television, is that it can be the 'public space' where we can share knowledge, ideas, identities within our own communities. Our aim has always been to provide the information and encouragement that will assist communities in finding the best solutions to their waste problems." In thousands of living rooms, church groups, and civic organizations around the world, the tapes of Video Active Productions bring people together in that public space. Their example offers a striking lesson for activist-producers seeking to effect environmental change: create the tapes the audience truly needs and the demand may fuel your endeavor.

♣ *Clout from the big leagues*

Nancy Bickell, a mother of two and a scholar with several degrees in English Renaissance poetry, never intended to become a video activist. But like LiveOak, Moore, Connett, and Bailey, she got hooked. During a leave from academia in the 1970s, she became actively involved in a local California chapter of the League of Conservation Voters. KTVU-TV in Oakland invited Bickell and other league members to work as volunteer producers on a series of candidate debates and documentaries about local political issues. Then came deregulation. One by one, stations dropped their public affairs



Nancy Bickell's tapes for the League of Women Voters of California, *Cleaning Up Toxics at Home* and *Cleaning Up Toxics in Business*, were accompanied by a full-blown educational campaign about the recycling of hazardous wastes.

Photo: Florence O'Donovan, courtesy filmmaker

programming. KTVU stopped doing joint ventures with the League of Conservation Voters, and Bickell struck out on her own as an independent producer.

Opportunity knocked in 1987 when the League of Women Voters of California released a statewide study of hazardous materials management in California and decided to educate its members on the subject. The League's panel of experts wanted to create two half-hour tapes, *Cleaning Up Toxics at Home* and *Cleaning Up Toxics in Business*, to educate the public and specifically promote household hazardous waste recycling drives run by local league chapters. Bickell had the experience and desire to produce the tapes and, no less importantly, she had approval from the League's Education Fund. But she had no funding.

She raised the $125,000 needed for the two tapes in less than a year. But she lost five months negotiating a broadcast deal with a commercial station that never came through. After Bickell had prepared the research and raised the funds, the station wanted editorial control. Bickell said no, and ultimately was able to maintain the integrity of her vision, though she regrets the lost time. She and the league decided to hold the release until fall 1990—six months after the twentieth anniversay celebration of Earth Day—hoping the tapes would hit people with the message: "Did you really do all those things you promised to do on Earth Day? Here's another chance."

The two tapes emphasize what citizens and small business owners can do to reduce the volume of toxic waste. They stress simple, practical steps people can take to reuse unwanted toxic waste (like donating old paint to community groups) and to reduce the amount of toxic products used in the first place (like using vinegar or baking soda in place of commercial cleaning products). The tone is so unthreatening to the corporate world that several corporations are among the funders of the project, including Dow, Clorox, and Hewlett-Packard. But by encouraging people to consider alternatives to toxic products, the message of the tapes does challenge business as usual, just in a much quieter, subtler, less confrontational way.

This approach, not surprisingly, has been extremely successful in reaching a very broad audience. Bickell did a mailing to the 1,100 league presidents in the U.S. a month in advance of the satellite feed through PBS's Pacific Mountain Network. A hundred leagues responded, and 98 public stations took down the feed. Bickell also designed a press packet and distributed it to every league chapter in California, stressing local angles to the story. Persuaded by local leaguers, if not by Bickell herself, 100 commercial broadcast and cable stations in California also aired the series and promoted local toxics clean-up programs.

In addition to promoting the tapes, the league prepared materials encouraging citizen participation. Concerned viewers were sent a "Cleaning Up Toxics Fact Sheet" upon request. Stations received a series of public service announcements promoting ways to eliminate toxic products from the home. League chapters in California received a free "Cleaning Up Toxics Kit" with suggestions about how to use the tapes effectively. One group of league chapters in Silicon Valley obtained a $5,000 grant for training speakers to use the video and lead discussions at meetings of civic organizations, senior citizens clubs, and environmental groups.

Yet the work of an independent is never done—even one with the backing of an organization the size of the California League of Women Voters. Bickell says she must wage a "constant campaign in this group of very print-oriented people to convince them that if they want to affect public opinion on public policy issues, they have to turn their emphasis to television." The commitment to constant and comprehensive public outreach campaigns like this one is exactly what Americans need to find the way to a greener future.

♣ *Saving the dolphins*

In 1975 Stan Minasian read an article about dolphins being killed by tuna fishing boats. Fishermen using purse seine nets (named for the way they close like a change purse) in the eastern tropical Pacific were slaughtering dolphins, which swim above schools of large yellowfin tuna in the hundreds of thousands. Minasian decided to make a film about the issue. With an idea and absolutely no experience, he approached various broadcasters to see if they would bite. KPIX-TV, a CBS affiliate in San Francisco, provided everything Minasian needed to make the film—producer, crew, publicists. Everything, that is, except the funding. So Minasian raised the $35,000 needed for his 16mm film, titled *The Last Days of the Dolphins*.

After the film aired on KPIX, Minasian obtained permission to distribute it to other broadcasters. With the help of the Environmental Defense Fund, Minasian provided the film free of charge to 325 commercial and public stations. Though it was an enormously successful first film, the surrounding publicity had no lasting impact on the tuna industry. The film contained no damning visual evidence of tuna boats slaughtering dolphins, and an industry representative told Minasian to his face that they could wait it out. They did. And Minasian went on to a career producing films about marine mammal issues.

Thirteen years later, biologist Sam Labudde walked into Minasian's office and told him he could get the footage needed to make the tuna industry change its ways. Labudde went to Mexico and got a job as a cook on a Panamanian fishing boat. The camcorder over his shoulder, he told his coworkers, was a gift from his father to document his wayward life at sea.

Over the next four months, Labudde shot the first evidence of the gruesome death of dolphins in tuna fishing nets. His images of dolphins drowning in the nets, crushed in the machinery, and thrown dead back into the water catapulted the slaughter to world attention. Despite extensive use of the tape by both national and international broadcasters, the tuna industry still showed no sign of changing its ways.

Labudde and Minasian teamed up to create a film that forced the tuna



Dead spotted dolphins on the deck of a tuna boat, a situation filmmaker Stan Minasian and biologist Sam Labudde helped turn around.

Photo: Earthtrust, courtesy filmmaker

industry to listen to the public's outcry against the slaughter. With Labudde's support, Minasian produced *Where Have All the Dolphins Gone?* (1990), an elegant film that conveys a gentle sense of the mysterious affinity between humans and dolphins. It chronicles the long struggle to prevent the tuna industry from killing dolphins. But the cornerstone of the film is Labudde's footage. Though the film received critical acclaim (first place at the 1991 U.S. Environmental Film Festival) and extensive play in 33 countries, its true succes lies in its impact on just one man: Anthony O'Reilly, chief executive officer of H.J. Heinz, which owns Starkist, the largest tuna packer in the United States.

A few weeks before the film aired nationally on the Discovery Channel in April 1990, Minasian sent a copy directly to O'Reilly and informed him that a series of PSAs would run throughout the hour asking viewers to call an 800-number and send telegrams to H.J. Heinz protesting the dolphin-slaughter. (In lieu of payment from the Discovery Channel, Minasian requested three-and-a-half minutes of advertising time for the PSAs during the broadcast of the film). One week before the airdate, O'Reilly announced that Heinz would buy only dolphin-safe tuna. Once Heinz announced this, Minasian rewrote and retaped the celebrity PSAs that originally called for a boycott of Heinz products. Instead, viewers were asked to send mailgrams to Washington in support of legislation banning the importation of tuna caught by methods that killed dolphins. When the film aired in 1990 and 1991, 60,000 people responded. An updated version of the film was cut in 1991 which included an interview with O'Reilly saying: "Because of the gross scenes that were shown in the Labudde film, there was a growing barrage of criticism, well-orchestrated, which I think served to convey a growing sentiment...that the previous fishing methods were no longer acceptable."

For a film so successful on so many fronts—aesthetically, politically, and critically—it received remarkably little support from broadcasters and cablecasters. Minasian first approached PBS, but it would not allow the use of a toll-free number (other than for its own fundraising and tape sales). In January 1990 Turner Broadcasting verbally committed to air the film. In exchange, Labudde and Minasian allowed Turner's series *The World of Audobon* to use three minutes of Labudde's tape in a program of their own on dolphins. After the *Audobon* program used 14 minutes, Turner turned down *Where Have All the Dolphins Gone*, saying the story had already been told. When the producers finally made a deal with the Discovery Channel, the network promised to publicize the cablecast widely; ultimately, however, it did almost nothing. Minasian placed ads himself in major publications. Discovery, which got free advertising and great ratings, criticized Minasian for going around it.

When asked about the success of the film, Minasian replies that his overriding feeling is one of relief. It took him 15 years and two films to tell the world about the dolphin slaughter. "If [environmental films] are going to be really effective in terms of changing things for the better, they are going to have to be allied with campaigns," says Labudde. "There is going to have to be some forethought given to how to use this film as part of a template for change." Currently Minasian has four films in various stages of production. He is most animated when he talks about one on driftnet and fillnet fishing, which he says may be the most impassioned film he has ever made. It will be worth watching what happens when executives in the fishing industry turn on their television sets and find Minasian once again at work.

As the experiences of these diverse producers demonstrate, to change business as usual in the environment we need to begin by changing business as usual on television. And we need to train more people, particularly grassroots activists, to turn to media when they have an important environmental issue to communicate. In this relatively new business of using media to protect the environment, a few simple maxims apply: there are no rules about who can produce; give the people the information they need, and they will respond; loosen the reins on copyright, and you will widen your circle of influence; think creatively about marketing, and you will find new audiences; spend the years it may take to get the word out, and you will be rewarded with the satisfaction of being heard, the gratification of seeing change, and the appreciation of future generations.

Karen Hirsh is a video producer and has acted as director of the Greenpeace video department since 1988.



This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser, director of the FIVF Festival Bureau. Listings do not constitute an endorsement. Since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. In order to improve our reliability and make this column more beneficial to independents, we encourage all film- and videomakers to contact FIVF Festival Bureau with their personal festival experiences, positive and negative.

Domestic

ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, July, NY. Sponsored by Asian CineVision, noncompetitive fest, founded in 1977, is country's oldest showcase for works by Asian & Asian American filmmakers. After NY run, fest begins 10-mo. tour of N. America. Films produced, directed &/or written by artists of Asian heritage eligible. Features & shorts in all cats accepted. Entries originally produced on film only; no video-to-film transfers. Asian American Media Award to honored filmmaker. Previous editions showcased 40 films from US, Canada, Australia, UK, Singapore, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, China, Iran. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Mar. 1. Contact: Minne Hong, Asian American Int'l Film Festival, Asian CineVision, 32 E. Broadway, 4th fl., NY, NY 10002; (212) 925-8685; fax: (212) 925-8157.

CAROLINA FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Mar. 31-Apr. 3, NC. Held at Univ. of N. Carolina, Greensboro, fest showcases outstanding student & ind. prods. Docs, narratives, experimental & animated works accepted. Jury awards $2,500 in prize money. Entry fee: $15 (under 25 min.); $25 (over 25 min.). Formats: 16mm, super 8, 3/4". Deadline: Feb. 10 (postmark). Contact: Paul Russ, Carolina Film & Video Fest, Broadcasting/Cinema Division, Carmichael Bldg., UNC-Greensboro, Greensboro, NC 27412; (919) 334-5360.

CINE COUNCIL ON NONTHEATRICAL EVENTS, August, DC. Nontheatrical films & videos (w/exception of TV ads & spot announcements) eligible for competition. Golden Eagles awarded in following cats: amateur, agriculture, animation/children's, arts/crafts, business/industry, doc, educational, entertainment/shorts, nature/environmental, history, medicine, oceanography, public health, safety/training, science, services, sports, travel. Entries must be US prods. CINE enters award winners in foreign fests. Winners also eligible for Academy Award nominations. Entries judged by 500 film/video pros. Entrants should send appl 1st & films/tapes when instructed. Entry fees: $45 & up. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Feb. 1 (also Aug. 1). Contact: Awards Director, CINE, 1001 Connecticut Ave, NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 785-1136; fax: (202) 785-4114.

GLOBAL AFRICA INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, June, CA. Presented by PCTV cable network, seeks works that capture experiences of people of African descent. Scope is int'l. Requires 3/4" (1/2" possible). Exhib. quality cassette. Entries meeting standards to be cablecast on PCTV in S.F. Bay area, and screened at Oakland Museum. Fee: $20. Deadline: March 1. Contact: Peralta Colleges TV, Global Africa Fest 1993, 900 Fallon St, 9th fl, Oakland, CA 94607; (510) 464-3253.

HOMETOWN USA VIDEO FESTIVAL, July 22, CA. Sponsored by Nat'l Federation of Local Cable Programmers, competitive fest, founded in 1977, recognizes outstanding local programs produced for or by local orgs & public, educational & gov't access operations. Awards: 4 special awards for overall excellence in public access, local origination, educational & gov't access; finalists, honorable mentions & winners in 34 cats, incl. performing arts; ethnic expression; entertainment; sports; by & for youth; live; municipal; religious; educational; instructional/training; informational; innovative; int'l; by & for seniors; PSA; doc profile/event/public awareness; video art; music video; local news; magazine format; original teleplay. 1993 awards ceremony in Atlanta. Entries produced in previous yr. Fest annually receives 2,000 entries. Deadline: Mar. 5. Contact: Hometown USA Video Festival, The Buske Group, 2015 J St, Ste 28, Sacramento, CA 95814; (916) 441-6277; fax: (916) 441-7670.

HUMBOLDT INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 25-28, CA. Forum for student & ind. filmmakers, fest, founded in 1967, "aims to support filmmakers who dedicate their time (& money) to expressing their imagination through film." Fest incl. workshops by judges/guest artists, nightly screenings of student works & postscreening gatherings. Held at Minor Theater (oldest feature film theater in existence). Entries must have been completed in previous 3 yrs. Accepts experimental narrative, doc, animation & any form of film created by students or inds. Entry fees: $30/16mm & super 8 up to 30 min.; $35/16mm or s-8 up over 30 min. & all 35mm films. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, s-8. Deadline: Feb. 13. Contact: Humboldt Int'l Film Fest., Theatre Arts Dept, Humboldt State University, Arcata, CA 95521; (707) 826-4113; fax: (707) 826-5494.

INTERNATIONAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL FILM FESTIVAL, July, IL. Formerly biennial John Muir Medical Film Festival. Annual fest, in 18th yr, moved to southern CA; will be held in Chicago this yr. World's largest competition devoted entirely to medical & health-related A/Vs, w/ gala awards ceremony featured on CNBC Network & Lifetime Medical Television, both sponsors. 40 film cats: 15 in health professional area (which air on Lifetime) & 25 health consumer cats (which air on CNBC). Grand Winner receives Helen Hayes Award. Over 1,000 entries from 21 countries expected. Theme: "Visions: Healing the Human Condition"; fest enlarged to incl. films on environment & how it affects health. Entry fees: $75-$200 (substantial discount to Academy members). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", interactive laser videodisc. Deadline: Mar. 30. Contact: Edith Nielsen, Int'l Health & Medical Film Fest, Academy of Medical Films, 4020 Palos Verdes Dr. North, Ste 120, Rolling Hills Estates, CA 90274; (310) 544-5899; fax: (310) 544-5897.

MONITOR AWARDS, July 10, CA. Sponsored by Int'l Teleproduction Society, an int'l trade association, competition honors excellence in electronic production & postproduction. Cats & craft areas incl. entertainment series; entertainment specials; film-originated entertainment; music video; nat'l commercials; local commercials; promotions; children's programming; sports; docs; short subjects; show reels; internal corp. communcations; promotional (nonbroadcast); informational (nonbroadcast); opens; closes; titles; transitions; logos; IDs; developmental computer animation. Awards best achievement honors to producers, directors, editors, etc. in each cat. Awards given at Beverly Hilton in July. Entries produced or postproduced between Jan. & Dec. of preceding yr. Entries originating on film must be postproduced electronically. Entry fees: $120-160. Format: 3/4". Deadline: Jan. 15 (please call; entry date may be extended). Contact: Cece Lazarescu, Int'l Monitor Awards, 350 5th Ave, Ste 2400, New York, NY 10118; (212) 629-3266; fax: (212) 629-3265.

MONTAGE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF THE IMAGE, Jul. 11-Aug. 7, NY. In coordination w/ Media Center at Visual Studies Workshop, Montage 93 invites students pre-K through grad school to submit work for exhib. of electronic time-based media "to celebrate fusion of arts & technology in contemporary image making & to explore the future of visual communications." Tapes reviewed by peer committees of time-based media students. Eligible entries must be time-based media incl. video, film, computer imagery & animation. Entries must have been completed after Jan. 1990. Max. length: 30 min. Formats: 3/4", 1/2", Beta, 8mm, Hi8. Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: Montage 93: Int'l Fest of the Image, 31 Prince St, Rochester, NY 14607-1499; (716) 442-8897; fax: (716) 442-8931.

NEW YORK INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF LESBIAN AND GAY FILM THE NEW FESTIVAL, June, NY. Showcases all film & video genres by, for, or about gay men & lesbians, incl. dramatic features & shorts, docs & experimental works. Entry fee: $5. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", s-8 (if transferred to video); preview on cassette. Deadline: Mar. 15. Contact: Jeffrey Lunger/Sande Zeig, New Festival, 80 8th Ave, Ste, 902, New York, NY 10011; (212) 807-1820; fax: (212) 807-9843.

NEWARK BLACK FILM FESTIVAL, July, NJ. 19th yr of 6-wk. summer fest of films by black filmmakers & films showcasing culture of blacks throughout world. Filmmakers, scholars, historians & other guests discuss films & interact w/ audience. Paul Robeson Awards, biennial competitive feature of fest, accepts noncommercial, ind. films/videos completed in previous 2 yrs in cats. of doc, non-doc, animation & experimental. Pieces produced for TV eligible; films produced for industrial, commercial or studio purposes ineligible. Cash prizes awarded to winning film in each cat. Program also features Special Films for Children. Cosponsored by Newark Museum, Newark Public Library, Newark Symphony Hall, Rutgers-Newark & NJ Inst. of Technology; tickets free to public. Entry fee: $25. Formats: 16mm, 1/2". Deadline: Mar. 1. Contact: Jane Rappaport, Newark Black Film Festival, Newark Museum, 49 Washington St, Box 540, Newark, NJ 07101; (201) 596-6550; fax: (201) 642-0459.

PHILADELPHIA FESTIVAL OF WORLD CINEMA, May 5-16, PA. Produced by Int'l House of Philadelphia, this curated & noncompetitive, annual 2-wk celebration highlights best of recent & classic world cinema. Fest features premiere screenings of int'l & US ind. feature & short films. Selections made by programmers & program consultants mostly based on viewings at other fests. Special events incl. tributes, workshops, Festival

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of Independents (showcase of works by film/videomakers in Philly area) & Set in Philadelphia screenwriting competition (deadline Feb. 1, entry fee $20, $3,000 in prize money, open to screenwriters who submit original feature-length screenplay set in Greater Philly metro area). Send letter & descriptive material only, no preview cassettes unless requested. Most decisions by Feb. 15. Contact: Linda Blackaby, director; Judy Adamson, managing director, Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema, Int'l House, 3701 Chestnut St, Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-6593; fax: (215) 895-6562.

PRINCETON LESBIAN AND GAY FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Spring, NJ. Accepts experimental, narrative, animation & doc works of any length. Works should be related to lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer or transgender concerns. Students encouraged to submit. No entry fee. Formats: 16mm, s-8, 1/2"; preview on 1/2" only. Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: LGBA, 306 Aaron Burr Hall, Princeton, NJ 08544; (609) 683-0052/258-4522.

RETIREMENT RESEARCH FOUNDATION NATIONAL MEDIA AWARDS, May 19, IL. Competitive fest for outstanding films, videos & TV series that address aging, capture images of older persons & illuminate challenge & promise of aging society. Entries must deal w/ concerns of aged or those working in field. Cats: ind. films, TV nonfiction, training & theatrical. Awards: 1st prize: $5,000, Owl statuette; 2nd prize: $1,000, plaque; honorable mentions: $500, plaque to 2 films; community video award in TV nonfiction cat. only: $2,000, statuette; special achievement award: $5,000, statuette. Entries must have been produced in US & released or initially televised between Jan. & Dec. of previous yr. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Feb. 2. Contact: Ray Bradford, Retirement Research Foundation Nat'l Media Awards, Center for New Television, 1440 N. Dayton, Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 951-6868.

RIVERTOWN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, April, MN. One of larger fests in upper Midwest region, noncompetitive fest of fests, sponsored by Univ. of Minnesota Film Society/Minnesota Film Center, annually presents 90 features from 30 countries & shorts. Programs held at Film in Cities, Walker Art Center, Orpheum & Varsity Theaters. Program incl. features, selected shorts or featurettes, contemporary int'l films, US inds. Different nat'l cinema each yr, commercial features for opening & closing. Schedule incl. some US premieres & occasional world premieres. Best of Fest awarded, based on audience poll, in several cats, incl. children's, feature, short, actor, actress. Limited funds for director's transportation & accommodations. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Apr. 15. Contact: Al Milgrom, fest director, Rivertown Int'l Film Fest., University of Minnesota Film Society, Minnesota Film Center, 425 Ontario St, SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414; (612) 627-4431; fax: (612) 627-4430.

SEATTLE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, May 13-June 6, WA. Now entering 19th yr, one of the largest noncompetitive events in the Northwest. Features (over 60 min.) & shorts (under 20 min.) accepted. Each yr about 140 films from 40 countries screened. Program incl. US & world premieres & special events (tributes, seminars, midnight screenings). Entry fees: $50 (features); $10 (shorts). Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Mar. 15. Contact: Darryl Macdonald, Seattle Int'l Film Festival, Egyptian Theater, 801 E. Pine St., Seattle, WA 98122; (206) 324-9996; fax: (206) 324-9998.

UPLAND MAIN STREET FILM FESTIVAL, May 13-15, CA. Seeks submissions of new features, shorts & docs

in several cats., incl. community life, environmental, history, current events, biz, sociology, drama, comedy, experimental, arts, nature, biography. Theme "Tales of the American West: Old & New." Competitive & curated sections. Formats: 16mm, 8mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on 1/2". Entry fee: $25. Deadline: Mar. 15. Contact: Cheryl Harris, competition chair, Main Street Film Festival, c/o Communication Studies UH-19, California State U., San Bernardino, CA 92407; (714) 880-5897/Fred Straeter, fest chair; (714) 931-2610.

USA FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 22-29, TX. Fest showcases new & original features & shorts, w/ program incl. premieres of new major motion pictures, best new works from ind. & emerging filmmakers, special tributes incl. Great Director Award & retro, 15th annual Nat'l Short Film & Video Competition & panel discussions w/ int'l filmmakers. Awards: up to $1,000 in cats incl. fiction, nonfiction, animation, experimental & awards for best of student, musical, family & ad/promotional works. One entry wins Charles Samu Award for "best representing excellence for family audiences." Deadlines: Mar. 5 (features & shorts for exhibition; contact programming dept.); Feb. 19 (short films/videos under 60 min. to competition; contact (214) 821-NEWS; entry fee $40). Contact: USA Film Festival, 2917 Swiss Ave, Dallas, TX 75204; (214) 821-6300; fax: (214) 821-6364.

WASHINGTON DC INTERNATIONAL FILMFEST DC, April, DC. More than 50 int'l features & 25 shorts receive Washington area premiere in noncompetitive fest, now in 7th yr. Fest sponsors 2 free events: Filmfest DC for Kids & Cinema for Seniors. Competitive section for Washington DC metro-area filmmakers. Cats incl fiction, doc, animation, family & children's programs, educational panels. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Filmfest DC, Box 21396, Washington, DC; (202) 727-2396; fax: (202) 727-9267.

WORLDFEST-HOUSTON INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 16-25, TX. Worldfest-Houston offers competition in several major cats: feature, doc, TV prod, experimental & ind. films/videos, shorts, commercials & PSAs, music videos, screenplays, student prods & new media. Cash prizes & trophies awarded. Fest receives entries of more than 3,500 films & tapes; over 150 features & more than 200 shorts, docs & experimental films are selected. Fest also incl. film/video market w/ buyers & distributors in attendance. Screenings held at AMC Greenway Plaza Theaters & Museum of Fine Arts. Deadline: Mar. 1. Contact: J. Hunter Todd, fest director, 26th Worldfest-Houston, P.O. Box 56566, Houston, TX 77256-6566; (800) 524-1438 or (713) 965-9955; fax: (713) 965-9960.

Foreign

ANNECY INTERNATIONAL ANIMATED FILM FESTIVAL, June 1-6, France. 3,000 attend biennial festival/market for animated work. Founded in 1956, it's world's largest animation event. Fest has films from all countries. Programming committees look at fiction films (shorts & features) & commissioned film/TV film (educational, company, commercials, credits, trailers, animated sequences, TV movies.) Competition section incl. short fiction programs, commissioned film/TV programs, feature film programs. Panorama section. Retros, tributes, exhibitions, colloquia & seminars also planned. Entries must have been produced in 2 yrs preceding fest. Awards: Annecy Grand Animated Film Prize; special distinctions for script, music, animation quality or backgrounds, computer animation; short film prize; 1st film; feature prize; FIPRESCI Prize; Youth

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Prize; ASIFA Prize; commissioned film prize (educational, scientific, company film); best commercial; best credits, trailer, animated sequence; TV series prize. Audiences estimated at over 55,000. MIFA, an int'l animation market, held at same time. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Contact: Festival Int'l du Film d'Animation, BP 399, 74013 Annecy Cedex, France; tel: 33 50 57 41 72; fax: 33 50 67 81 95.

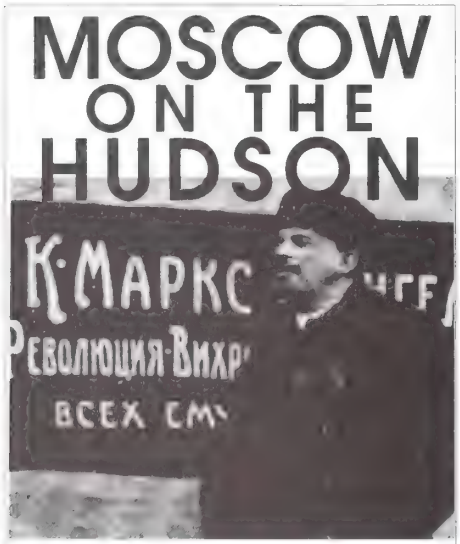
BANFF TELEVISION FESTIVAL, June 6-12, Canada. Fest incl. int'l competition, conference for TV pros, informal coproduction marketplace. Cats: made-for-TV movies, miniseries, continuing series, short dramas, TV comedies, social/political docs, performance specials, children's programs. Competition entries must be made for TV (films in theatrical release not eligible). Entries originally in English or French must premiere after March of preceding yr. Producers of programs judged best in each cat receive "Rockies" sculptures. Grand Prize awarded to film or program judged Best of Fest. Jury may also make 2 Special Awards for outstanding achievements. Special "on-demand" screening facilities for all programs, in or out of competition. Contact: Jerry Ezekiel, Banff Television Festival, Banff Centre, 204 Caribou St., #306, Box 1020, Banff, Alberta, Canada TOL OCO; (403) 762-3060; fax: (403) 762-5357.

CANNES INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, May 13-24, France. Now in 46th yr, Cannes is 1 of world's largest, most prestigious & selective fests, over 35,000 guests. Activities incl. screenings, parties, ceremonies, press conferences & major film market. Screening or award at Cannes provides fame & prestige. Selection Committee, appointed by administrative board, chooses entries for Official Competition (about 20 films) & for Un Certain Regard section. Films must be made w/in prior yr, released in country of origin & not entered in other fests. Official selection consists of 3 sections: Official Competition, in which features & shorts compete for major fest awards; Special Out-of-Competition, which showcases features ineligible for Competition (e.g., films by previous winners of Palme d'Or) & Un Certain Regard, noncompetitive section for films of int'l quality that do not quality for competition, significant works in the fields of innovative features, films by new dirs, etc. Parallel sections incl. Quinzaine des Realisateurs (Directors' Fortnight), main sidebar for new talent, sponsored by Assn of French Film Directors; La Semaine de la Critique (Int'l Critics' Week), selection of 1st or 2nd features & docs chosen by members of French Film Critics Union (must be completed w/in 2 yrs. prior to fest) & Cinemas en France. Market screens films in main venue & local theater. Awards incl.: Official Competition's Palme d'Or (feature & short) & Camera d'Or (best 1st film in any section). Formats: 35mm, 16mm. For info & accreditation, contact Catherine Verret, French Film Office, 745 Fifth Ave, New York, NY 10151; (212) 832-8860; fax: (212) 755-0629. Official Selection: Festival Int'l du Film (deadline: Mar. 1), 71, rue du Faubourg St. Honore, 75008 Paris, France; tel: 33 1 4266 92 20; fax: 33 1 42 66 68 85, tlx: FESTIFI 285 765 F. Quinzaine des Realisateurs (deadline April 17), Societe des Realisateurs de Film, 215, rue Faubourg St. Honore, 75008 Paris, France; tel: 33 1 45 61 01 66; fax: 33 1 40 74 07 96. Semaine Internationale de la Critique (deadline March 1), 21 rue des Grands Champs, 75020 Paris, France; tel: 33 1 43 73 80 10; fax: 33 1 43 70 85 82. Cannes Film Market, attn: Marcel Lathiere, Michel P. Bonnet, 71, rue du Faubourg St. Honore, 75008 Paris, France, tel: 33 1 42 66 92 20; fax: 33 1 42 66 68 85; tlx: FESTIFI 285 765.

KOBE INTERNATIONAL INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL/INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM COMPETITION, June 8-13, Japan. Ind. short films under 60 min. invited for int'l competition in new film festival. All genres, completed since Aug. 1, 1991, accepted. Entries must not have been previously screened in Japan for more than 7 days or on more than 7 occasions. Awards: Kobe Grand Prize (¥5,000,000); Special Jury Award (¥2,000,000); Young Director's Award (¥1,000,000); Kinetoscope Award to Japanese film (¥1,000,000); Kobe Citizens' Award to audience favorite (¥1,000,000). Fest will invite one filmmaker each of Grand Prize nominees (approx. 20) to fest, covering r/t economy class ticket & accom. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Mar. 1. Contact: Kobe Film Awards Exec. Committee, KIIFF Secretariat, Golden Sun Bldg., 4th fl., 4-3-6 Nakayamate Dori, Chuo-ku, Kobe, 650, Japan; tel/fax: 81 78 252 1691.

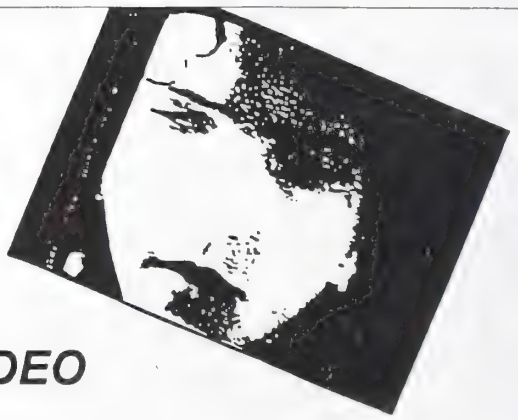
LONDON INTERNATIONAL LESBIAN AND GAY FILM FESTIVAL, March, UK. 7th yr of fest, sponsored by British Film Institute, presents 100 films/videos from world w/ thematic retros, rare screenings & special events. Goal to present new work by lesbians/gays "alongside other films/videos of particular interest for lesbian/gay content or for imaginative way in which they address themes of sexuality & gender." Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: Paula Jalfon, London Int'l Lesbian & Gay Film Fest, Nat'l Film Theatre, South Bank, Waterloo, London SE1 8XT, UK; 71 815 1322; fax: 71 633 9323.

MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, June 4-19, Australia. Now in 42nd yr, FIAPF- & Int'l Short Film Conference-recognized fest is one of



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MONTBELIARD INTERNATIONAL VIDEO AND TELEVISION FESTIVAL, June, France. Int'l competition for original video reflecting personal research. Entries must have been produced in preceding 2 yrs. Program incl. special screenings, debates, professional meetings. Contact: Manifestation Internationale de Vidéo et de Télévision, Centre Int'l de Création Vidéo Montbéliard Belfort, BP 5, 25310 Herimoncourt, France; 33 81 30 90 30; fax: 33 81 30 95 25.

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF SHORT FILM, March, Canada. Presents short films/videos by young people who are ind., nonprofessional or student directors. Only prods by indivs 35 & under are accepted. Official Competition, open to any Quebecer, Canadian or foreign production, made in an ind. or nonprofessional context, awards ALCAN Grand Prize for fiction, animation, doc & video. Entries must have been completed in prior 2 yrs & not exceed 45 min. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, s-8, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on cassette. Entry fee: $24. Deadline: Jan. 22. Fee: $45CDN. Contact: Festival Int'l du Jeune Cinema, Association Pour le Jeune Cinema Quebecois, 4545 Pierre-de-Coubertin Ave, Box 1000, Station M, Montreal, Quebec H1V 3R2, Canada; (514) 252-3024; fax: (514) 254-1617.

YAMAGATA INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILMFESTIVAL, Oct. 5-11, Japan. Doc film art accepted in this competitive, 1st-established int'l doc fest in Asia. Approx. 15 films chosen by selection committee & organizing committee for screening; 7-member int'l jury awards following: Grand Prize (Robert & Frances Flaherty Prize (¥3,000,000); Mayor's Prize (¥1,000,000); 2 runner up prizes (¥300,000); special prize (¥300,000). Entries must have been produced after April 1, 1991 & not released publicly in Japan prior to showing. Only feature-length docs eligible (no shorts). Special events: Seizing the Image-Indigenous Peoples' Video & Film; Asia Program; Japanese Doc; Ogawa Shinsuke retro; Japan Film Program. Fest pays for Japanese versions of prints & covers expenses for one rep. of film to attend fest. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Mar. 31. Contact: Yamagata Int'l Documentary Film Festival, Tokyo Office, Kitagawa Bldg, 4th fl, 6-42 Kagurazaka, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 162, Japan, tel: 03 3266 9704; fax: 03 3266 9700.

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ALTERNATIVE FILMWORKS, nat'l distributor of exp. narrative & docs, seeks work. No mainstream films, please. Send VHS, Hi8 or 8mm copy to: Alternative Filmworks, Dept IC, 259 Oakwood Ave, State College, PA 16803; (814) 867-1528.

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SCRIPT SUPERVISION WORKSHOP: Jan 15, 16, 17 (Fri. eve. 5:30-9:30, Sat. & Sun. 9-6) in New York City w/ Lynne Twentyman, IATSE 161 871 (credits incl. *Doc Hollywood*, *All That Jazz*). Covers feature film, series TV & commercials. $295/session. Limited enrollment. (212) 580-0677.

I WANT YOUR SCREENPLAY. Determined ind. filmmaker seeks property for prod. Any style considered: dramatic, comic, unusual, mainstream. Fresh writing stands out from the pack. Submit yours to: The Kessler Company, Box 976, Village Station, NY, NY 10014.

PRODUCTION DESIGNER, costume designer, sound mixer/designer, gaffer & editor sought for low-budget feature film to be shot in Hawaii in May/June 1993. Send resumés to: Lisa Onodera, 626 1/2 Santa Monica Blvd, Ste 204, Santa Monica, CA 90401.

AWARD-WINNING SREENWRITER seeks angel to help jump-start his directing career. Has extensive background in film production & has directed several shorts. Now it's time for a feature & I have some good scripts! If you are up to it, contact: Kyle Michel Sullivan (713) 528-7456, P.O. Box 460362, Houston, TX 77056-8362.

FORTY ACRES & A MULE FILMWORKS now accepting scripts for development. Submit feature manuscripts to: Forty Acres & a Mule Filmworks, Story Development Dept, 124 DeKalb Ave, Brooklyn, NY 11217.

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FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars, and workshops, and an information clearinghouse. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following individuals and businesses:

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Conferences ▪ Seminars

AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO ASSOCIATION celebrates 50th anniv. in 1993. Special events incl. 35th American Film & Video Festival & Conference, May 26-30, Chicago. Theme: New Technologies: The Frontiers of Media Production w/ demos of new tech; workshops on intellectual freedom, copyright/fair use; library security systems, etc. Contact: AFVA, Box 48659, Niles, IL 60714; (708) 698-6440.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TELEVISION offers workshops on S-VHS & 3/4" editing (starting Jan. 11) & intensive 12-wk Video Doc Production (starting Feb. 17). Cost: $100 & $400, respectively. Also, free 3-day Basic TV Production Workshop (also in Chinese) w/ Manhattan Neighborhood Network. For DCTV/MNN TV workshop, contact: (212) 260-2670; for seminars contact: DCTV, 87 Lafayette St, New York, NY 10013; (212) 966-4510.

ROCHESTER INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY's Fast Rewind: Archaeology of Moving Images Conference, July 22-25, Rochester, NY, seeks panel/paper proposals & works for screening. Third int'l conference on moving image preservation provides forum on teaching, financing, research & exchange. Deadline: March 1. For submission info: RIT, College of Liberal Arts, Bruce Austin, William Kern Professor in Commun., 1 Lomb Memorial Drive, Box 9887, Rochester, NY 14623-0887; (716) 475-6649. To register: (716) 475-6649.

UNIVERSITY FILM AND VIDEO ASSOCIATION's 47th Annual Conference seeks proposals for panels/papers, media writing (i.e., treatments, doc proposals, screenplays) & screenings. Students & nonstudents invited to submit materials & participate in conference. Panel topics incl.: Post Colonialism & Diaspora Culture; Ethical, Creative & Pedagogical Implications of New Tech; Freedom of Speech: Access to Tech; Freedom, Censorship & Funding; Contested Territory: Bodies on Screen. Deadline: January 31. For appls, contact: Jeff Rush, Radio-TV-Film, Temple Univ., Philadelphia, PA, 19122; (215) 787-3859; fax: (215) 787-5280.

WORKSHOP FOR VIDEOMAKERS: "Fieldwork" is a forum to show works-in-progress & receive informed feedback from other media artists. 10 wks, Thurs. 6-8 p.m., beg. Jan. 14. Final screening at The Kitchen. $60. For more info, call The Field, (212) 691-6969.

Films ▪ Tapes Wanted

ARTISTS' TELEVISION ACCESS accepts 1-pg. proposals for video installations on politics, media, social org./control & gender issues. 8' x 7' space faces storefront window. Esp. interested in local artists. Samples of past video work helpful. Contact: ATA, 992 Valencia, San Francisco, CA 94110; Attn: Sean Ryan.

AXELGREASE, wkly public access program, seeks exper., narrative, animation, doc & computer imaging under 27 min. Showcases video & film on Buffalo access & around US. Send 1/2", 3/4", Beta, 8mm, or Hi8 tapes to: Axlegrease, c/o Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo Media Resources, 372 Connecticut St., Buffalo, NY 14213; (716) 884-7172.

BAD TWIN, NY-based production/exhibition collective, seeks films under 30 min. for ongoing programs in Europe & US. Alternative approaches to all genres & forms welcomed. Must have finished 16mm prints avail. Submit VHS only for preview; incl. SASE for return. Contact: Bad Twin, Box 528, Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276.

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length. Deadlines for Notices will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., January 8 for the March issue). Send to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, NY, NY 10012.

CABLE ACCESS SHOW seeks short drama, doc, animation & experimental films/videos. Interested parties should send 3/4" copies to: Quick Flicks c/o Eugene Haynes, 814 10th Ave, #3A, NY, NY 10019 or call (212) 642-5236.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video art interstitials to play btwn alternative music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave, SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTER FOR NEW TV (CNTV) seeks 3/4", VHS or Hi8 work for cable access show. Contact: CNTV, 1440 N. Dayton St., Chicago, IL 60622.

CENTRAL AMERICAN NEWS PROJECT seeks indivs to produce news & public affairs pieces for monthly access show on Central America. Contribute footage or contacts w/ people in CA w/ film or video equip. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St, Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

CINEMA EXPERIMENTO, monthly program of experimental & avant-garde shorts, seeks work on 16 & 35mm (30 min. max). Send work or preview tapes on VHS or U-matic w/ return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 1108 Pike St, Seattle, WA 98101. For more info., contact: Jon Behrens or Galen Young; (206) 682-7064.

COMEDY CENTRAL seeks comedic, short student/ind. films/videos under 3 min. to air on its flagship program, Short Attention Span Theater. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes to: Josh Lebowitz, HBO Downtown Prods, 120 E. 23rd St, 6th fl., NY, NY 10010; (212) 512-8851.

DEEP DISH TV (DDTV) seeks participants for its 1993 spring season on healthcare: propose a special project for distribution, a tape for screening or tape compilation on a topic of your choice. Topics might incl. nat'l healthcare, reproductive freedom, holistic alternatives, healthcare in prison, environmental health, AIDS, etc. Let us know how your community is using technology for empowerment. For more info, contact: DDTV, Cynthia Lopez, programming director, 339 Lafayette St, New York, NY 10012.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" Beta & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Tanya Steele, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St, NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

FLICKTURES seeks 2-5 min. comedy prods, any genre, any style, to air on L.A. cable access; possible deferred pay. Send 3/4", 1/2", Beta or super 8 w/ SASE to: Flicktures, c/o Barker/Morgan Prods, 12039 Allin St, Culver City, CA 90230-5802.

IV-TV, wkly half-hour video shorts program in Seattle, seeks mini-docs, video art, found footage, news leaks. Contact: John Goodfellow or David Moore, IV-TV, 2010 Minor E., Ste B, Seattle, WA 98102.

LA PLAZA, wkly doc series on WGBH, Boston, seeks original works by ind. film/videomakers w/ themes relevant to Latinos. Contact: La Plaza/Acquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave, Boston, MA 02134.

LESBIANS IN THE CREATIVE ARTS (LICA) invites submissions of original works for an Evening w/ LICA video cabaret. Artists must own all rights. Contact: Video, Ste 443, 496A Hudson St, NY, NY 10014.

MINORITY TELEVISION PROJECT, Bay Area multicultural public TV station, invites programming from independent directors, producers & writers who have person of color in key creative position & present crosscultural perspectives. Children's, entertainment, animation, features, health, education & lifestyles sought. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes (orig. must be on 3/4" or 1" for broadcast) to: Roger Gordon, 71 Stevenson St, Ste 1900, San Francisco, CA 94105; (415) 882-5566.

NATIVE VOICES seeks proposals for 2 half-hour cultural affairs progs by/for Montana Native Americans. Contact: Native Voices Public TV Workshop, Dept. of Film & TV, Montana State Univ., Bozeman, MT 59717; (406) 994-6223.

NOMAD VIDEO seeks works from videomakers of all ages, backgrounds & skill levels for monthly screenings. Screenings showcase grassroots artists at changing locations around Seattle area. Send VHS, S-VHS or Hi8 & SASE to: Gavin the Nomad, 501 N. 36th St, #365, Seattle, WA 98103; (206) 781-0653.

PERALTA COLLEGES TV (PCTV), multicultural educational station reaching 200,000 homes in Oakland-Berkeley area, seeks challenging social-issue docs & culturally diverse TV programs. Rare alternative outlet in Bay area. Excellent exposure. Submit 3/4" or VHS tape w/ short description & letter granting local cablecast rights to: PCTV programming, 900 Fallon St, Oakland, CA 94607; (510) 464-3253.

PMS (POST-MODERN SISTERS), nat'ly touring exhibition program, looking for innovative & challenging shorts by women for future programs. Contact: Lisa Austin, (415) 648-3810 or Susanne Fairfax, (415) 751-3507.

REAL ART WAYS seeks entries for April screening series featuring CT independent video & filmmakers. Cats: open. No industrials, educational, promotional music videos or commercial prods. 60-min. limit (single titles or short titles compiled on single tape). Nominal fee paid for work; distributor attn. Deadline: March 1. Send VHS for pre-screening, 50-word description per title, bio/resume, b+w publicity photo & $15 to: Real Art Ways, 56 Arbor St, Hartford, CT 06106.

REEL TIME, monthly film series at Performance Space 122, seeks experimental, doc & narrative films. Submit super 8 & 16 mm to: Jim Browne, c/o Reel Time, P.S. 122, 150 1st Ave, NY, NY 10009; (212) 477-5288.

SOUTH CAROLINA ARTS COMMISSION seeks film/video works for 1993-94 Southern Circuit, 6-artist tour of 8 southern states in 10 days. No appl. Submit VHS, 3/4" or 16mm of at least 45 min. w/ resumé & publicity for prescreening. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: SCAC, Media Arts Center, 1800 Gervais St, Columbia, SC 29210; Attn: Susan Leonard, acting director.

THE 90's CABLE CHANNEL seeks programs that bring alt. perspective to issues. Network of 8 full-time cable channels reaches 500,000 homes. Contact: Laura Brenton, 1007 Pearl St, #260, Boulder, CO 80302.

THE 90's seeks short (under 15 min.) doc, music & experimental Hi8 works for nat'l broadcast. Excerpts, works-in-progress accepted. Pays $150/min. Contact: Fund for Innovative TV, 400 N. Michigan Ave, #1608, Chicago, IL 60611; (312) 321-9321.

TOONTOWN RATS, Artists Television Access' new animation forum, seeks animated shorts. Send submissions to: Artists Television Access, 992 Valencia St., San Francisco, CA 94110; or contact Keith Knight, (415) 752-4037/824-3890.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, cablecast on Drexel Univ.'s channel 54, seeks narrative, animation, experimental, performance & doc works by young filmmakers from Philly & elsewhere. Show reaches 767,000 households in 3 states. Contact: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St, Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

VIDEO SHORTS, nat'l competition of video artworks, announces 12th annual round. Accepting entries in 3/4", 3/4" SP, VHS, S-VHS, 8mm, & Hi8 formats, NTSC standard only. 6-min. limit. Entry fee: $20/piece & $10 for each add'l on same cassette. Max. 3 pieces/person. Submit to General or Computer Animation categories. Entries postmarked by Feb. 1. Min. 10 winners get $100 & works mastered on 1". Contact: Video Shorts, Box 20369, Seattle, WA 98102; (206) 325-8449.

WILLOW MIXED MEDIA seeks Amiga-based works for Amiga Artists on the Air, program distributed on cable access & video. Small fee. Submit material on 3.5" Amiga disks, VHS, 3/4" tape to: Toby Carey, Willow Mixed Media, Box 194, Lenox Ave, Glenford, NY 12433; (914) 657-2914.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database, seeks submissions of films & videos for database which incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & biographical data. Contact: Helen Lee, Women of Color in Media Arts Database, Women Make Movies, 225 Lafayette St, Ste 207, NY, NY 10012; (212) 925-0606.

WYBE's primetime series of independent film & video, *Through the Lens*, seeks fresh, dynamic works w/ unusual points of view for 3rd season on Philadelphia's innovative public TV station, channel 35. Works by & about women & people of diverse ethnic & cultural backgrounds encouraged. All genres & styles. Shorts to 30 min. preferred. Fee: $25/min. Deadline: Jan. 29. For appl., contact: Through the Lens III, WYBE TV 35, 6117 Ridge Ave, Philadelphia, PA 19128.

WYOU-TV, cable access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for wkly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St, Madison, WI 53703.

Opportunities ▪ Gigs

BOSTON SCHOOL OF MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS seeks filmmaker for F/T faculty position. Candidate must have strong background in 16mm production & will teach beginning & advanced classes. Special effects exp. helpful. Requires: screening & exhibition record; ability to work w/& teach wide variety of styles; familiarity w/ related disciplines (s-8, video, computers, etc.) desirable. Deadline: Jan. 15. Send resume, sample or video (VHS or 3/4"), statement of teaching philosophy, names of 3 refs familiar w/ work (incl. addresses & phone numbers) & SASE to: Dean's Office, Film Search, School of Museum of Fine Arts, 230 The Fenway, Boston, MA 02115. EOE.

CALIFORNIA COLLEGE OF ARTS & CRAFTS seeks temp. instructors for 1993-94 academic year in Intermediate Film, Directing, Lighting & Animation (Fall 1993); Intermediate Video, Critical Projects-New Genres (Spring 1994). Also considering Beginning Film/Video. Deadline: February 1. Positions begin August 30. Salary commensurate w/ exp. Requirements: MFA &/or record of professional accomplishment. Send letter, vitae, list of refs, tape or slides (no more than 20) w/ SASE to: FVP Search, c/o Human Resources, CCAC, 5212 Broadway, Oakland, CA 94618.

CAROLINA THEATRE PROJECT seeks film programmer/manager for 3-screen, nonprofit complex. Deadline: Feb. 1. For info., contact: Carolina Theater, Box 1927, Durham, NC 27702; (919) 687-2748.

HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE seeks visiting asst professor of film & photography for 1-yr, half-time sabbatical replacement beginning autumn 1993. Possible 1-yr, half-time renewal for 1994-95. Requirements: Candidate should be active filmmaker w/ strong professional record & teaching exp; MFA or equiv. preferred. College emphasizes individ. instruction & collaborative interdisciplinary work & offers Third World studies program. Deadline: Feb. 1. Submit letter, resumé, names & addresses of 3 refs & sample of work in original format to: Film & Photography Search, Humanities & Arts, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA, 01002. EOE. Women & minorities encouraged.

ITHACA COLLEGE has narrative film production position avail. in Cinema & Photography Dept. of Roy H. Park School of Communications. F/T, tenure-eligible position starts August 15, 1993. Teach fiction film prod., directing & all levels of 16mm film prod. Must have PhD or MFA in film or related discipline; active ABDs also considered. Send resumé, 3 refs to: Marcelee Pecot, chair, Film Production Search Committee, Dept of Cinema & Photography, Ithaca College, Ithaca, NY 14850-7251; (607) 274-3242.

LITTLE CITY FOUNDATION seeks P/T video art teacher to work w/ developmentally challenged persons at media arts center in Palatine, IL. Nonprofit advocacy org serves children & adults w/ mental retardation, Down syndrome, autism, etc. No previous exp. working w/ this population required. Requires: video prod. exp., B.A. in Fine Arts preferable, demonstrated understanding of other art forms w/ strong interest in visual, musical, conceptual & performing arts. Must have own trans. Salary commensurate w/ exp. EOE. Deadline: Jan. 15. Send letter, resumé, references & sample reel to: Human Resources, Little City Foundation, 1760 West Algonquin, Palatine, IL 60067. No phone calls please.

RICE UNIVERSITY seeks asst prof. of Media Studies for 3-yr appointment, tenure-track for August 1993. Teach history, theory &/or criticism of film/photo &/or TV in 2 or more areas: int'l/Third World media; experimental film/video/photo; or doc. Requires: PhD or MFA; com-

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mitment to undergrad ed; interest in production preferred. Salary commensurate w/ exp. Opps for participation in interdisciplinary/cultural studies programs. Deadline: Jan. 10. Send vitae, 3 letters of rec., copies of pubs to: Brian Huberman, S.C. Rice University, Dept of Art & Art History, Box 1892, Houston, TX 77251. EOE.

TEMPLE UNIVERSITY Dept of Radio-TV-Film seeks teacher of undergrad/grad writing, direction, production &/or film/video aesthetics. Requirements: Candidate's work should combine artistic vision w/ social concerns & awareness of media history, theory & aesthetics. PhD, MFA or equiv. Appl review continues til position filled. Send letter, vitae & names of 3 refs to: Professor Alan Wells, chair, personnel committee, Dept of Radio-TV-Film, Temple Univ., Philadelphia, PA 19122.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA AT IRVINE Dept of Studio Art seeks videomaker w/ rank of ass't/assoc. professor. Candidates must have prod./screening record & teaching exp. Knowledge of computer imaging & MFA or equiv. desired. Candidates must be able to teach both undergrads & grads (teaching load is 2 courses/quarter) & be willing to work on curriculum development as well as development of video facilities. Teaching duties begin September 1993. Appls should incl. vita, statement of teaching philosophy & adequate representation of production, w/ any necessary supplemental material, 4 letters & SASE. EEO. Direct appls or nominations for position to: Catherine Lord, chair, Dept of Studio Art, UC Irvine, CA 92717.

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS CHICAGO School of Art & Design invites appls for F/T, tenure-track position as asst prof or 3-yr appointment at rank of assoc. prof., depending on qualifications & funding. Begins Fall 1993. Requirements: video portfolio, ability to teach undergrad & grad studio arts, MFA or equiv., higher education teaching exp &/or 3 yrs professional exp. w/ strong exhibition record. Salary commensurate w/ exp. Deadline: Feb. 15. Send letter, vitae, at least 4 refs & 2 video samples (labeled on container & tape) w/ descriptions. Installation work may be represented by max. of 12 numbered & labeled 35mm slides in plastic sheet w/ description list incl. title, date, medium & location. Collaborative works must be identified as such. Send dubs only & SASE for return. Contact: Judith Kirshner, Univ. of Illinois at Chicago, School of Art & Design, 929 West Harrison St., Rm 106JH, Chicago, IL 60607-7038. EOE. Women & minorities encouraged.

UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN, Dept of Radio-TV-Film has 2 positions open: production & screenwriting. Prod. requires MFA, PhD & strong record. Screenwriting requires teaching experience; prod. teaching skills desired. Submit 1-pg. teaching philosophy. Send cover, resumé, sample work (on VHS) or screenplay & 3 letters to: Faculty Search Committee, Production/Screenwriting, Dept of Radio-TV-Film, Univ. of Texas at Austin, Austin, TX 78712-1091.

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSON-MADISON seeks tenure-track ass't professor in Television Studies for fall 1993. Looking for scholars w/ expertise in history, industry studies, policy & regulation, audiences, int'l & intercultural studies, media & cultural theory. Should be able to teach undergrad. courses in one or more areas & grad. seminar. PhD required. Deadline: Jan. 15. Women & minorities encouraged. Send inquiries & vita, 3 letters & samples to: Prof. Vance Kepley, Dept of Communication Arts, 6110 Vilas Hall, Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison, Madison, WI 53706.

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18 Benefits of Membership

THE INDEPENDENT

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*. Published 10 times a year, the magazine is a vital source of information about the independent media field. Each issue helps you get down to business with festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and more. Plus, you'll find thought-provoking features, coverage of the field's news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters.

THE FESTIVAL BUREAU

AIVF maintains up-to-date information on over 650 national and international festivals, and can help you determine which are right for your film or video.

Liaison Service

AIVF works directly with many foreign festivals, in some cases collecting and shipping tapes or prints overseas, in other cases serving as the U.S. host to visiting festival directors who come to preview work.

Tape Library

Members can house copies of their work in the AIVF tape library for screening by visiting festival programmers. Or make your own special screening arrangements with AIVF.

INFORMATION SERVICES

Distribution

In person or over the phone, AIVF can provide information about distributors and the kinds of films, tapes, and markets in which they specialize.

AIVF's Member Library

Our library houses information on distributors, funders, and exhibitors, as well as sample contracts, funding applications, budgets, and other matters.

SEMINARS

Our seminars explore current business, aesthetic, legal, and technical topics, giving independent producers a valuable forum to discuss relevant issues.

BOOKS AND TAPES

AIVF has the largest mail order catalog of media books and audiotaped seminars in the U.S. Our list covers all aspects of film and video production. And we're constantly updating our titles, so independents everywhere have access to the latest media information. We also publish a growing list of our own titles, covering festivals, distribution, and foreign and domestic production resource guides.

continued

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DIRECTORY OF WOMEN'S MEDIA, 16th ed., announces new feminist info tools. Published by Women's Inst. for Freedom of the Press, directory incl. brief descriptions of over 1,300 print & electronic media, publishers, bookstores, libraries, archives, distributors & other media resources for, by & about women. Nat'l Council for Research on Women, 47-49 East 65th St, New York, NY 10021; (212) 570-5001.

DISC MAKERS GUIDE TO MASTER TAPE PREPARATION avail. free upon request from Philadelphia-based audio manufacturer. 45-page booklet, revised & updated for 1992, explains how to prepare master tape for error-free mass production. All formats covered, including all-new section on DAT. Contact: Tony van Veen, (800) 468-9353.

ELECTRONIC ARTIST GROUP publishes Electronic Marketplace, a resource guide w/ ads for animators, interactive & multimedia producers, electronic svc. bureaus, computer illustrators, etc. Send $3 to EAG, Box 580783, Minneapolis, MN 55458.

GUIDE TO PUBLIC TELEVISION FUNDING published by Corporation for Public Broadcasting to help producers understand program funding. Send SASE (#10 envelope) to: *Who Funds PTV?*, CPB Publications, 901 E. St, NW, Washington, DC 20004-2006; (202) 879-9600.

IN HER OWN IMAGE: Films & Videos Empowering Women for the Future, singled out as best new media publication of 1992 by American Film & Video Assoc., features reviews of more than 80 works exploring wide range of issues affecting women around world, indexed by geography, subject, title & appropriate audience. Includes essays on int'l women's issues & uses of media for social change in community & classroom. Avail. from Media Network, (212) 929-2663.

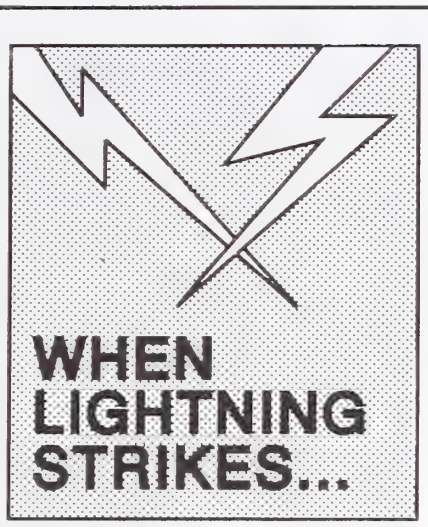
MONEY FOR FILM & VIDEO ARTISTS, published by American Council for the Arts, lists 190 sources of support for ind. filmmakers & videographers. $14.95 plus shipping & handling. Contact: Doug Rose, ACA Books, Dept 25, 1285 Ave of the Americas, 3rd fl, Area M, NY, NY 10019; (212) 245-4510.

NAMAC master list providing current info on calls for work, funding & residency progs. avail. to NAMAC members. Send SASE to: NAMAC On-Going List, 1212 Broadway, Ste 816, Oakland, CA 94612.

PAPER TIGER TELEVISION CAT A LOG highlights selection of popular & recommended programs & listing of titles. For copy, send $2 to: Paper Tiger Television, 339 Lafayette St, NY, NY 10012 (212) 420-9045.

TAX REFUNDS IN FLORIDA, 32-pg. ref. manual for producers working in FL includes summary of law, definitions & appl. for refunds. Send check for $45 to: FMPTA, 355 Beard St, Tallahassee, FL 32303 (in-state orders should include sales tax). Fax VISA or MC requests to: (800) 989-9FAX.

WPA'S STOCK FOOTAGE REFERENCE GUIDE provides info on 10,000 hrs of footage from WPA's collections. For free copy, contact: WPA Film Library, 15825 Rob Roy Drive, Oak Forest, IL 60452; (800) 323-0442; fax: (708) 687-3797.



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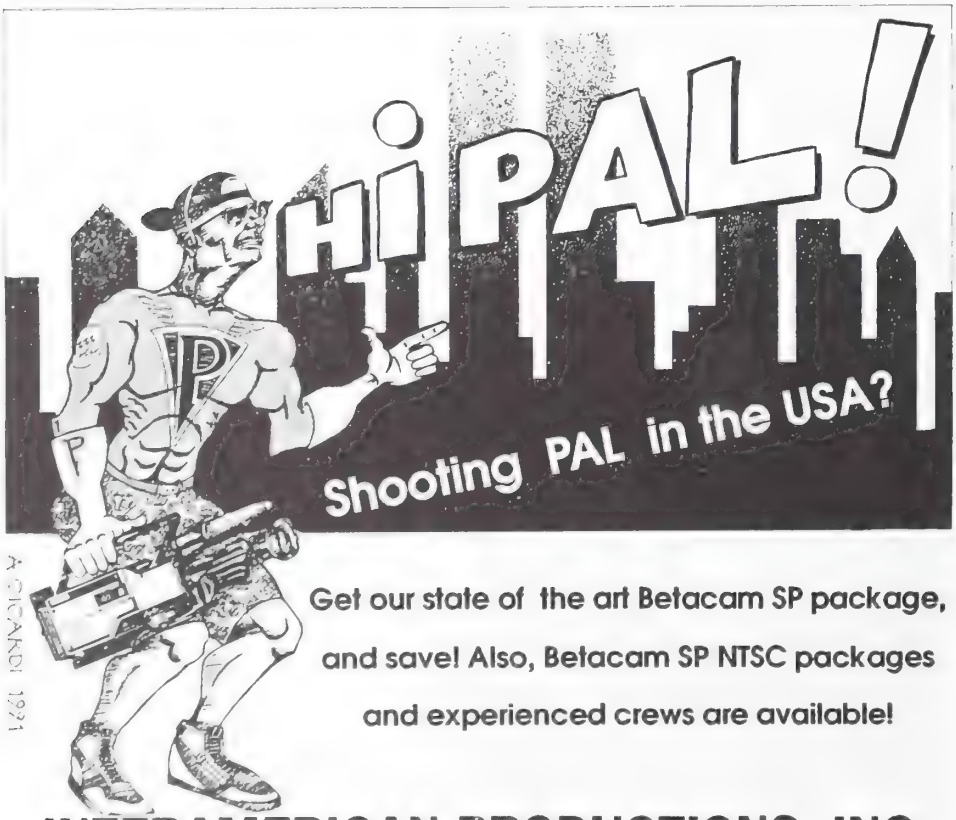
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CPB/PBS seek proposals for Primetime Series Initiative. CPB's TV Program Fund & PBS' National Program Service will allocate up to $6-million in FY93 in support of series w/ no fewer than 10 episodes & no more than 52, suitable for primetime scheduling on public TV. Deadline: Jan. 29. Contact: Charles Deaton, CPB, (202) 879-9740 or Pat Hunter, PBS, (703) 739-5449.

ENVIRONMENTAL FILM RESOURCE CTR provides detailed info on environmental films produced in last 4 years. Services include subject, prod & acquisition info, annual newsletter. Contact: EFRC, 324 N. Tejon St, Colorado Springs, CO 80903; (719) 578-5449.

ETC's ELECTRONIC ARTS GRANTS program offers Presentation Fund grants to nonprofit orgs in NY State. Partial support avail. for presentation of audio, video, computer & time-based electronic art. Deadline: End of each month. Contact: Experimental Television Center, 180 Front St, Owego, NY 13827; (607) 687-1423.

FIRST FILM FOUNDATION, charitable foundation based in London, offers assistance, expertise & contacts in A/V industry for new talents w/ 1st film project for TV or cinema. All genres, incl. animation. Contact: First Film Foundation, Canalot Production Studios, 222 Kensal Road, London W10 5BN, England; (44) (81) 969 51 95; (44) (81) 960 63 02.

FOUNDATION CENTER provides info on philanthropic foundations & agencies that award grant money to the arts. They also publish guidebooks. Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Ave, NY, NY; (212) 620-4320.

INDEPENDENT TELEVISION SERVICE seeks proposals from ind. producers or teams for 9-part, multi-genre TV series that explores issues confronting variety of people affected by HIV/AIDS. Deadline: Jan. 15. Also, Third Open Call. Deadline: March 16. For guidelines & appls, contact: ITVS, 333 Sibley, Ste 200, St. Paul, MN 55101; (612) 225-9035.

INTERMEDIA ARTS CENTER offers artists free access to equipment for participation in collaborative arts projects. Org. has 3/4" A/B/C/D roll computer, chroma-key, computer graphics & 3-D animation systems. Call Michael Rothbard, IMAC exec. dir, (516) 549-9666.

JEROME FOUNDATION funds indiv. film & video artists living & working in NYC metro area. Appls accepted any time, reviewed 3x/yr. Contact: Jerome Found., West 1050 First National Bank Building, 332 Minnesota St., St. Paul, MN 55101; (612) 224-9431.

MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK seeks grant applications for 1992-93 Annual Revolving Fund. This yr, funds awarded to nonprofit community orgs in NYC interested in providing video training to the public. Training will result in production of community-based TV programs shown on city's public access cable channels. Deadline: Feb. 18. For info, contact: Sandra Sheu, MNN, 110 E. 23rd St, 10th flr, NY, NY 10010; (212) 260-2670.

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MID ATLANTIC ARTS FOUNDATION supports arts administrators through its Visual Arts Travel Fund. Applicants must be administrator or curator of nonprofit visual or media arts org. in Mid-Atlantic state. Travel grants awarded for 50% of documented expenses incurred to attend an event (max. $200). Deadline: 6 wks before event or dates of travel. For guidelines contact: Michelle Lamuniere, VAP Associate, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, 11 East Chase St, Ste 2A, Baltimore, MD 21202; (301) 539-6656.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS (NEA) International Program funds US artists & arts organizations to develop meaningful international interchanges & make visible the diversity & richness of artistic expressions. Deadlines as follows: Int'l Projects Initiative (for US orgs w/exemplary innovative exchange projects), Feb. 5; Travel Grants Pilot (enabling US artists to carry out collaborative, creative projects w/ foreign colleagues), Jan. 29, May 14; ArtsLink (supporting exchange btwn US & Eastern Europe, Central Europe & former USSR), April 5; US/Mexico Artists Residencies (2-mo in Mexico), deadlines vary w/ discipline; US/Japan Artist Exchange Fellowships (6-mo fellowships for work & study in US & Japan), deadlines vary w/ discipline; British American Presenters Residencies (2-wk residencies to US presenters to see new work), February 15. For appls, contact: Int'l Program, NEA, Nancy Hanks Center, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., Washington, DC 20506; (202) 682-5422.

NEW YORK COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES Media Projects—pioneering effort to bring together films on video, filmmakers & scholars in public forums throughout NYC—seeks proposals for programs. Events feature presentations at screening by filmmaker or scholar, framed by a talk and discussion. $350 honorarium to filmmaker, $250 to scholar w/ up to $150 addt'l in travel expenses. For appl. contact: NYCH, 198 Broadway, 10th fl, New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-1131.

O.T.O.L. VIDEO invites producers to edit projects on video at its Southern CA facility. Submit synopsis of project, cover letter describing financing plan & brief description of principal people involved. Sample reel can be submitted. For more info, contact: O.T.O.L. Video, 1800 Stanford St, Santa Monica, CA 90404; (310) 828-5662.

PHILADELPHIA FILM & VIDEO ASSOCIATION (PIFVA) offers subsidy program to help complete ind. noncommercial films/videos/audio works by PIFVA members based in greater Philadelphia area. Grants paid directly to facilities for lab/facility services at discounted rates as negotiated by artist. Ave grant: $500; max. $1,000. Deadlines: Feb. 1; April 2; June 15. For appl., contact: (215) 895-6594.

WOMEN IN FILM FOUNDATION FILM FINISHING FUND awards grants from $25-50K for completion & delivery of work consistent w/ WIF's goals: at least 50% of prod personnel must be women, subject matter must relate to women & be of general humanitarian concern & project must be broadcast quality for exclusive 1-year or 4-broadcast exhibition rights on Lifetime Cable. For guidelines, contact: Lifetime TV Completion Grant, WIFF, 6464 Sunset Blvd, Ste 900, Los Angeles, CA 90028.

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MINUTES FROM THE AIVF/ FIVF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The board of directors of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) met in New York City on October 17. In attendance were: Dai Sil Kim-Gibson (chair), Robert Richter (president), Dee Davis (vice president), Debra Zimmerman (treasurer), Loni Ding (secretary), Bart Weiss, and Ruby Lerner (ex officio).

Lillian Jimenez, FIVF's NEA Advancement Grant consultant, conducted a brainstorming session with the board to gain ideas on how to improve and redirect the organization. The board agreed the organization should concentrate on financial management, expanded membership, collaborations, visibility/marketing, leadership, earned income, structure, communication, and organizational management for the short term (up to one year). The long-term concentration should also include new technology and AIVF facilities. It was agreed that the initial $5,000 grant allocated by the NEA will be used to upgrade computer equipment and to conduct a membership survey.

Ruby Lerner, AIVF's new executive director, expressed her excitement about the future of AIVF. Her immediate goals include financial and debt management. Lerner introduced the newest staff member, Michele Shapiro, managing editor of the *Independent*, and announced the promotions of Anissa Rose to administrative assistant and Stephanie Richardson to membership director.

Stephanie Richardson reported problems acquiring accurate membership counts from the computer, which led to a shortage in the October issue of the *Independent* . Richardson extended by two months the memberships of those who did not receive the issue. She is working with a computer consultant to rectify the situation. Richardson reported on the three seminars planned for early next year: a tax seminar in January, a two-day workshop with Dov S-S Simens, and a low-budget workshop with James Schamus.

Development director Susan Kennedy announced that Norman Wang, a publicist with the Renee Furst company, is the newest edition to the FIVF-nominated board.

On the advocacy front, PBS recently announced its decision to tie production funding to video rights. This is currently being fought by the Independent Media Distributors Alliance (IMDA), together with related media organizations. Kim-Gibson asked Richter to take up the issue and report to the board.

The board agreed with Zimmerman that there should be an AIVF board/staff representative on panels at the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers (NAMAC) conference this June in Chicago, which AIVF is helping to plan. She also suggested that the AIVF summer board meeting be held in Chicago.

Zimmerman and Weiss proposed that AIVF join Artswire. The proposal was unanimously adopted.

Davis, a member of the Independent Television Service (ITVS) board of directors, reported that ITVS has accepted the same CPB contract as last year. He also reported that ITVS's future Open Calls will be open to projects seeking completion funding of up to $100,000.

The dates for the 1993 board meetings will be decided at the next meeting. A weekend retreat for board members will be held from January 8 through 10, 1993, and the next meetings will take place on January 9- 10.

ADVOCACY ALERT

In December the Corporation for Public Broadcasting proposed a plan to implement the "balance and objectivity" requirement of 1992's reauthorization. CPB's proposal includes a call for "internally balanced" programs and said that "point-of-view" programs should be balanced by other programming dealing with the same issue "over a reasonable period of time." CPB also indicated that its board will take "remedial steps" to rectify any perceived imbalance in programming. People For the American Way stated publicly that the call for internally balanced programs is "a dangerous intrusion into program integrity" and that CPB's vague reference to remedial steps "could have a chilling effect on programming." CPB's board will vote on the proposal January 26 and People For urges supporters of public broadcasting to review it, outline concerns, and express those concerns before the 26th. Write to: Sheila Tate, CPB Board chair, 901 E. St, NW, Washington, DC 20004. For more info, call People For's Field Dept. (202) 467-4999.

WE'RE SO SORRY

A problem with AIVF's mailhouse resulted in a delay in the mailing of the December 1992 issue. Our sincere apologies to subscribers. If you have any further problem with your subscription, please contact Stephanie Richardson at 212/473-3400.

UPCOMING FIVF SEMINARS

THE RETURN OF THE INDEPENDENT TAX SEMINAR FOR PRODUCERS

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- *Reviewing Histories: Selections from New Latin American Cinema*, with a preface by Ariel Dorfman ***(was $8, now $4)***
- *Filmmakers Dictionary* by Ralph S. Singleton ***(was $12.95, now $7.95)***

For a complete list of sale items, send a self-addressed, stamped, business-sized envelope to: AIVF's New Year Blow-out Book Sale, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012. Act now, supplies are limited! (List not available by fax.)



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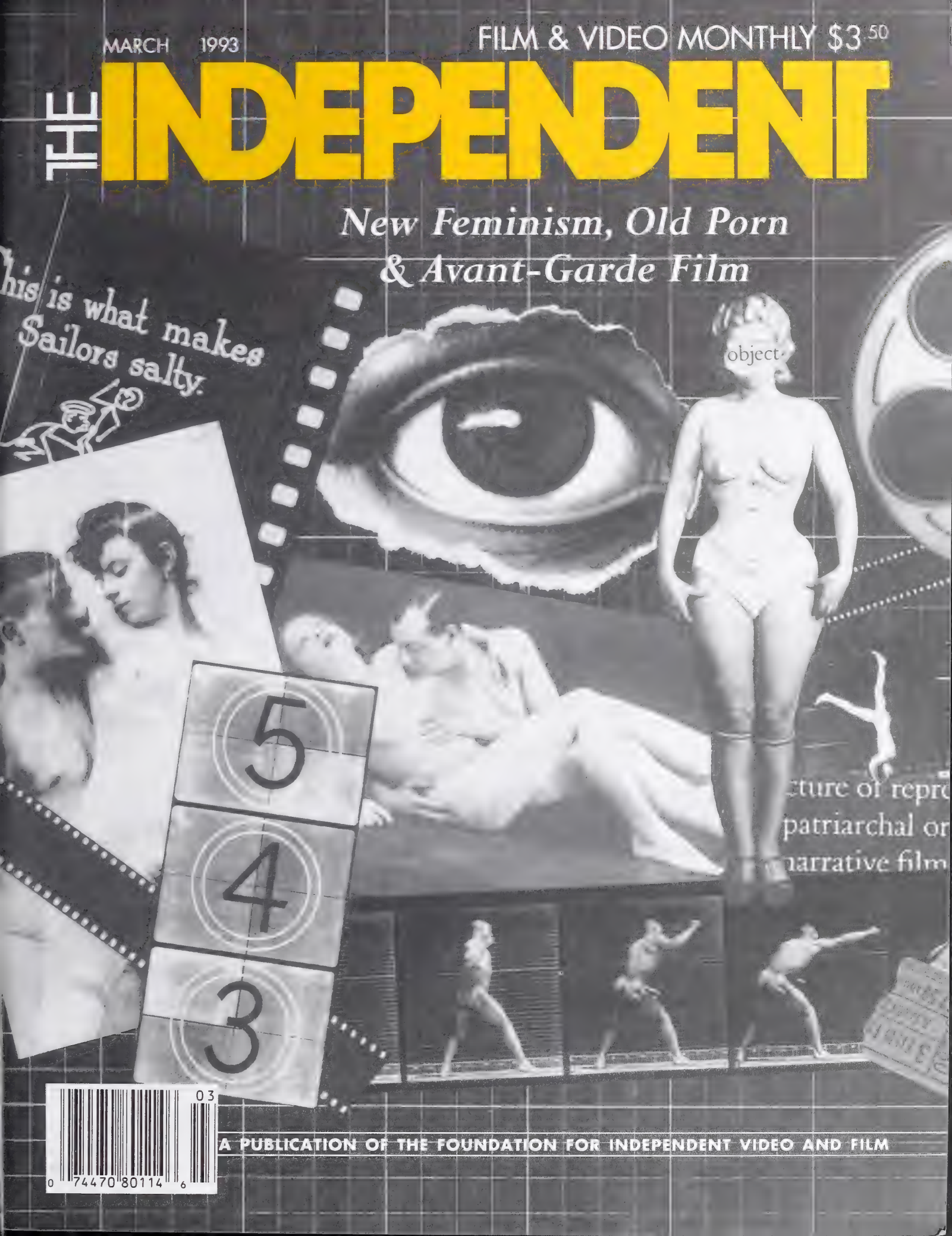
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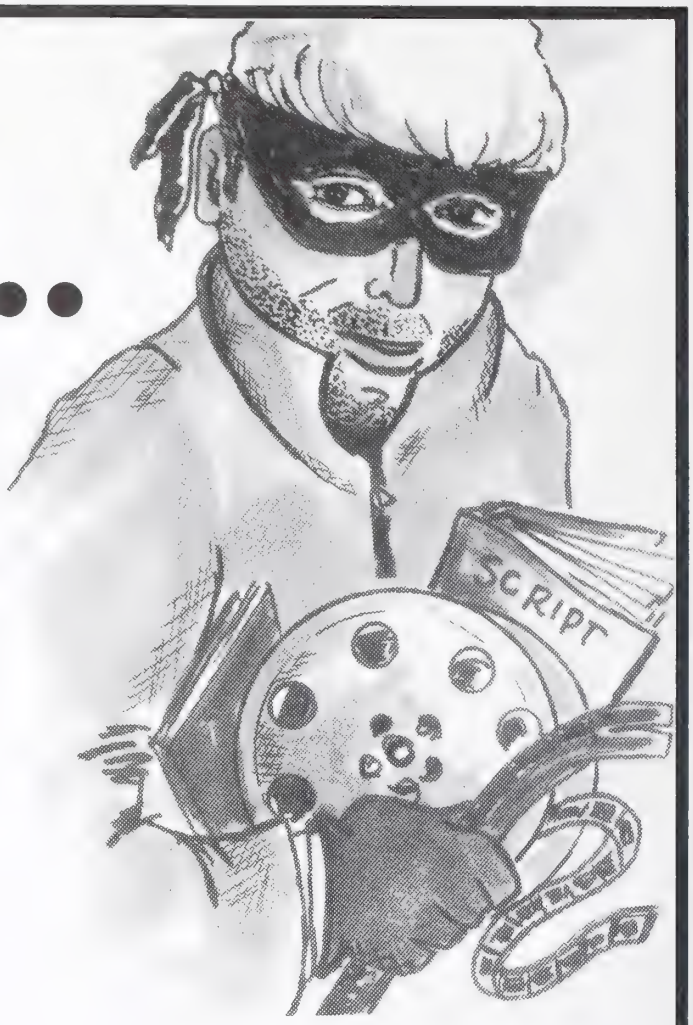
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To the editor:

For over a decade Direct Cinema has distributed the films of Robert Drew. "The Drew Archive" is open to individuals and scholars and handles the distribution of the films *Primary* and *Crisis: Behind a Presidential Commitment*.

In several places in your admirable article "Inside the Clinton Campaign War Room with D.A. Pennebaker and Chris Hegedus" [January/February 1993], you misattribute the authorship of the films on John F. Kennedy, *Primary* and *Crisis*.

In your introduction you refer to those films as "Pennebaker's earlier work on the political process." Later *Primary* is referred to as a film that Richard Leacock, Robert Drew, Al Maysles, and Terrence McCartney "worked on with you [Pennebaker]."

Not to diminish Pennebaker's contribution as a cameraman and editor on *Primary* and cameraman on *Crisis*, it should be pointed out that he worked on these films as part of a team with a number of creative contributors. It should also be pointed out that the films were conceived and produced by Robert Drew. The credits of these films make this clear.

Mitchell W. Block
president, Direct Cinema Limited
Santa Monica, CA

Patricia Thomson responds:

In an endeavor as collaborative as filmmaking, I would hope that it's permissible to refer to a filmmaker's "earlier work" as editor/cameraman without citing full credits on those projects. That said, it is true that without Robert Drew's involvement as catalyst and producer of *Primary* for Time-Life Broadcasting and *Crisis* for ABC News, neither of these landmark projects would have gotten off the ground.

BIAS DEBATE CONTINUED

To the editor:

Like a dog that won't let go of its favorite bone, David Horowitz is continuing to bash *South Africa Now* a year after that series ended its run here and was handed over to producers in South Africa ["The Bias Debate: Radicals Rule PBS Documentaries," December 1992].

As he appropriates Richard Nixon's favorite phrase to "make himself perfectly clear," he pours more uninformed, overheated polemical fury on the grave of a series that won the George Polk Award, an Emmy, and lots of acclaim worldwide. And yet we are grateful that the show did not pass quietly into the night as one more somnolent PBS series. The subjects it covered *were* upsetting. We wanted the series to arouse debate—and it continues to do so!

As the creator and executive producer of *South Africa Now*, I feel compelled to respond [to Horowitz' piece] lest his charges be believed by their frequent repetition, and not only by the sycophantic handful of his fellow travelers in the media. I fear that by not responding even some of *The Independent*'s readers who have not paid close attention to the *details* of this debate, or missed the shows in question, might think, "Well, maybe he has a point or two" and thus unintentionally confer legitimacy on this continuing assault.

I am sure there are sectors of the South African government and its apologists who agree with him that the show "was a disservice to the struggle to liberate South Africa," but to allow Horowitz and his fellow commissars of "media integrity" to pose as some kind of objective arbiters of what would be of service to liberation there is a joke that smacks of a kind of noblesse oblige, if not racism. In any event, our journalistic enterprise never represented itself as a liberation tool.

Permit me to deal with his specifics before returning to express one real concern.

Charge: *South Africa Now* supported "the Stalinist wing" of the ANC. Response: Crap! This reminds me of the person who says he's an anti-communist only to be told that a critic doesn't care what kind of communist he is. This is a lie. *South Africa Now* reported on all political movements, factions, and tendencies in Southern Africa. Horowitz's red baiting aside, the bulk of our 156 programs over three years focused on the issues driving a mass-based and internationally-supported struggle for democracy and against apartheid. The show never editorially backed any liberation movement, force, or faction. Many of the most prestigious Church, labor, community, and human rights leaders in South Africa endorsed the program because we were challenging the media censorship in South Africa at the very time that Horowitz was challenging us.

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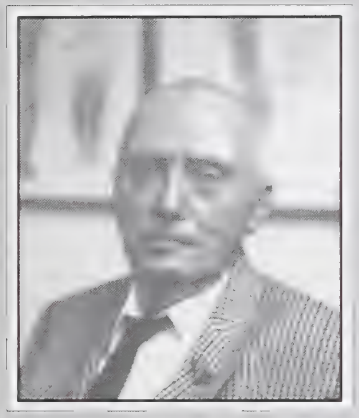
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COVER: Elaborating on a French pornographic short, Ken Jacob's experimental film XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX (1980) sparked heated controversy at the 38th Robert Flaherty Seminar. Laura U. Marks considers the piece and the questions it raises about art, feminism, pornography, generation gaps, and the gaze.

Cover illustration: © 1993 Victoria Kann.

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Contention: We uncritically backed Winnie Mandela. The truth: We ran several substantive segments on Mrs. Mandela's case which reported it in far greater detail than any other television news magazine. We did air a criticism of a sensational *Vanity Fair* article critical of Mrs. Mandela. The criticism was *not* made by us, but by an internationally respected South African lawyer who once represented Mrs. Mandela in an earlier case before the apartheid courts. Our background piece reported the charges in *Vanity Fair*'s article and included an interview with its writer. Unlike most of the media, we did not convict Mrs. Mandela before her trial—and were interested in all sides of that issue.

Debating and discussing issues—and offering a diverse range of opinion—doesn't mean that you are taking a side. The writer in question, Graham Boynton, told me personally that he thought we probably knew more about the case than he did—and, as a matter of fact, we later carried his response to the charge against *Vanity Fair* that was offered in the first instance as an interviewee's personal supposition, not as a *South Africa Now* position. (Again Horowitz plays loose with the facts. There was never a charge that *Vanity Fair* was investing in South Africa. The lawyer Joel Carson argued that *Vanity Fair* may have been bashing Winnie Mandela because *at the same time* its sister publication *Conde Nast Traveller*—for which Boynton works—was accepting a major ad spread from a South African government tourist promotion—before sanctions were lifted. Personally, I do not believe that the writer was influenced by that, and we aired his denial.) Yes, David, we frequently reported views the producers didn't personally endorse. All journalists do. That's our job.

Hollow "victory": After three years, *South Africa Now* was briefly dropped by just one of all the PBS stations that carried it, in part, because of Horowitz's secret and distorted lobbying campaign. He "claimed credit" in the *LA Times* for its cancellation! That decision was sensibly reversed after the station proved itself more responsive to viewer support for the show than Horowitz's harangues. It is significant that to this day he dismisses the well argued and passionate support of leaders in Los Angeles' black community, as well as editorial endorsements for the show in leading mainstream newspapers, as a "tantrum." He continues to stereotype viewers of the show as "leftists" or people who need to be told how to distinguish opinion from fact and so warned in advance. What arrogance!

Not content to smear *South Africa Now*, Horowitz was later quoted as saying that he would oppose Globalvision's new human rights series *Rights and Wrongs* sight unseen. Who should be embarrassed now? Is this legitimate media criticism or just a continuing right-wing vendetta against a company that was able to get a respected weekly series on the air?

Right now, Globalvision is asking PBS stations to carry the new series, and many are. We fear that Horowitz and Co.'s tendentious campaign of insinuation and half-truths may have a chilling effect on timid programmers who fear that his well-funded poison pen will embroil them in unwanted controversy. The new series incidentally has the backing of respected foundations and human rights organizations, who, unlike Horowitz, have a deep commitment to getting the truth out.

Danny Schechter
executive producer, Globalvision
New York, NY

David Horowitz responds:

I like Danny's gumption. An aging political activist who has spent his entire adult life supporting totalitarian causes (Fidel, Pol Pot, etc.) with no apologies and no looks back, still pretending to be an objective journalist just doing his "job."

Those *Independent* readers who happend to tune in to the amateurish *South Africa Now* series before its merciful demise know that Danny is blowing smoke. (Indeed, anyone who knows Danny personally will be amused by his pretensions to journalistic objectivity and *gravitas*.)

Of course *South Africa Now* supported the revolutionary-terrorist factions of the ANC. In covering the December 1991 ANC convention, for example, *South Africa Now* pointedly omitted the most significant news of that event (reported by everyone else) that Mandela and others were pushing a moderate position, and even contemplating the early lifting of sanctions. Instead they devoted the major portion of their "report" to an on-camera interview with the terrorist Ronnie Kassrils (masked in a PLO Kafiyeh for dramatic effect). Kassrils told viewers that liberation would only come through armed struggle. There were no parallel interviews with ANC moderates like Thabo MBeki and Pallo Jordan, let alone with ANC critics, black or white, left or right, of whom there are many. So party-line was *South Africa Now* that it even found time to lend credibility to Fidel Castro's sordid show trial and execution of General Ochoa—although the connection to "news" about South (or Southern) Africa was tenuous at best.

South Africa Now's treatment of the more-in-sorrow-than-in-anger *Vanity Fair* piece on Winnie's torture-murder of a 14-year-old comrade was vicious and unprincipled, despite Danny's labored attempt to present it as journalistically neutral. (Calling the article "sensational" is just another late attempt to discredit its reporting.) I like Danny's claim that he wanted to wait until the facts were in before convicting Winnie Mandela. How about General Ochoa? Or DeKlerk for that matter? Or Chief Buthelezi, or any other among the politically incorrect whom he is so quick to condemn? Danny says his show was "interested in all sides of (the Winnie Mandela) issue." Perhaps he could identify for us a segment in which *South Africa Now*'s producers chose to profile, for ex-

ample, Nomavenda Mathiane, the courageous black journalist for *The Sowetan* who first brought the Winnie affair to light? I'm not going to hold my breath for a response.

It's true that a Maoist paper reported me as saying that I would oppose Globalvision's new series sight unseen. But I never did say that, as I have already written in *Current* in response to similar Schechter abuse. I have also written in *Current* and in *The Independent* and in *Comint* my denial that I ever conducted a lobbying campaign, secret or otherwise, against *South Africa Now*. The fact is that Danny cannot cite a single sentence I have written or uttered against his new series in the year or so since plans for it were announced. So what's the problem, besides the fact that Danny doesn't like his old show criticized or his political con game exposed?

DEFINING GAY CINEMA

To the editor,

As cofounder of the New York Lesbian and Gay Experimental Film Festival and a curator since 1986, I would like to respond to Judith Halberstam's article on contemporary lesbian cinema ["Some Like It Hot: The New Sapphic Cinema," November 1992]. Halberstam raises the issue of audience rejection of avant-garde and experimental film in gay and lesbian film festivals, and I think this subject needs to be addressed within the larger context of the role of these festivals.

Historically, gay film began with *Dickson Sound Experiment Number Three*, a silent short of two men dancing that was made in the 1890s. From the dawn of cinema, gay film was synonymous with experimentation but soon branched out into its second genre—pornography. Formal invention and explicit sexuality have been the main expressions of, and also the motives for, gay film. This seems like a logical direction, since dominant culture provides a conventional narrative only for heterosexual life. Heterosexual film (whether made by gay people or not) has overwhelmingly followed these same structures. For women, the official story is heterosexual romance, marriage, and motherhood. For men, it is heterosexual romance, war, marriage, and fatherhood. But dominant culture has never provided a story of homosexual life, and so no formal structure was available for filmmakers to assume.

The first gay film festivals were porn shows, and the next were avant-garde screenings. But the first overtly stated gay film festivals, such as Vito Russo's screenings at the gay Firehouse, came at the beginning of the post-Stonewall period. These events have served a variety of functions, but for many years now the desire for cultural assimilation has predominated in the aesthetic choices of most gay film festivals. Specifically, for decades programmers have been promising gay audiences that the Gay or Lesbian Hollywood Feature was just around the corner. And in preparation they ignored the century-long history of gay experimentation and pornography and substituted, instead, the history of the gay subtext in Hollywood film. This was later expanded to include a variety of bad gay and lesbian narrative features which have tried artificially to establish a traditional narrative for gay life. But Imitation of Straight Life has proven to be a very unsuccessful formula indeed. By looking to conventional structures as the only desirable model while simultaneously avoiding the formally inventive, emotionally complex personal films, the festivals have been training gay audiences to be highly intolerant of our community's own indigenous art forms. So now, when imaginative and subversive film is shown in mainstream gay festivals, audience members often walk out or exhibit indignant hostility towards the work.

Ironically, this reaction has occurred with work that is often the most original and emotionally accurate. Some quick examples include Cecilia Dougherty's *Coal Miner's Granddaughter* at Frameline in San Francisco, Su Friedrich's *First Comes Love* in Toronto, and the Austrian lesbian feature *Flaming Ears* at New York's New Festival. Some of the most brilliant and resonant films that I have seen in recent years have been rejected repeatedly by the mainstream gay festivals. I'm thinking specifically of Jim Hubbard's *Elegy in the Streets*, a 40-minute silent, hand-processed film about ACT-UP, or his eight-minute short, *Two Marches*, which articulates the terrible loss of expectation and hope that came with the advent of the AIDS crisis. Increasingly programmers favor expensive, slick film-school work or independent features and traditional documentaries.

Of course we want and need expressions of gay and lesbian imagination in all forms, genres, and disciplines. And I do not believe that any one form is superior to any other. I, too, look forward to quality feature films from lesbian and gay perspectives. But the training of gay film audiences to reject formal invention, super 8, hand-processing, silent film, and other experimental choices streamlines the collective imagination in an assimilationist direction.

This problem becomes even more dramatic because of the emergence, over the last few years, of gay features that have achieved mainstream approval and distribution. Ironically, none of these acclaimed films are sexually explicit—which reveals the most dramatic accommodation gay work has made for marketing purposes. The media have called these de-sexualized films "The New Queer Cinema," but there's a lot more new queer cinema being made by women, people of color, poor people, and video artists that is emotional, sexually explicit, and formally inventive. The features that have been singled out as representative are often closer to the Old Straight Cinema than the vast majority of new lesbian and gay work being made today.

The film festivals, as community-based insti-



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tutions, should be articulating an oppositional voice to the mainstream vision of what is acceptable gay cinema. But instead they are playing catch-up by featuring these expensive works over the more grassroots productions. As gay images and issues come increasingly under the control of the mainstream media, we have to vigilantly think through and articulate a presentation of work that best suits our own visions. For this reason programmers and curators now have a special opportunity to really provide creative alternatives to help stimulate independent thought in our communities.

Sarah Schulman
curator, New York Lesbian and Gay Experimental Film Festival
New York, NY

Judith Halberstam responds:

Sarah Schulman's capsule history of gay and lesbian film festivals provides an extremely important context for discussions of contemporary queer film. Certainly one wants to recognize a tradition of gay and lesbian experimental productions that runs counter to the conventional narratives of heterosexual life. And, furthermore, I agree with her that the "New Queer Cinema" represents only the most timid examples of gay and lesbian film and video. Indeed, I made a rather similar statement in my article when I suggested that *Flaming Ears* "attempts to capture a new queer aesthetic, one radically different from the sleek and beautiful images of gorgeous gay men that has been heralded as the new Queer Cinema."

I think, however, that Schulman is wrong to unilaterally equate "formal invention" and experimentation with "imaginative and subversive film." In my article I tried to make the relationships between spectators and artists, and mainstream film and independent productions a little more complicated. I want to think about the ways in which, sometimes, formal experimentation is not subversive but simply obscures a vital political message. Sometimes, I think, lesbian artists give up on narrative altogether because they equate any narrative structure with conventional narrative structure. And sometimes programmers and artists see a film as brilliant simply because it sidesteps conventional forms. Shouldn't we have more complex measures of value?

Furthermore, I do not believe that programmers are quite such a uniform group as Schulman suggests. She thinks that "the festivals have been training gay audiences to be highly intolerant of our community's own indigenous art forms." This makes programmers into a uniform group of people with an almost conspiratorial intent. Festivals vary enormously in terms of their intentions, their anticipated audiences, their proportions of experimental and narrative films, the amount of video work they show, the balance between gay and lesbian features, etc. It would be almost impossible to orchestrate the "training" of audiences that Schulman implies.

The reason people often cannot watch experimental film is not because they have been indoctrinated, but because only a small and elite group of people have been schooled in universities and art schools to be precisely the audience that such films require. It is difficult to watch formally inventive productions, just as it is difficult to read avant-garde literature. Why then do we expect people to just know how to participate in such readings?

To be blunt, there is no simple relation between mainstream and experimental cinema. Avant-garde productions are not always subversive. Conventional narratives are not always heterosexist. Programmers rarely share a vision; festivals vary immensely. Indeed, even the relationship between gay film and lesbian film is extremely complicated, and it would be hard to claim that gay men and lesbians even share a film history. It would be even harder to group, as Schulman does, work by "women, people of color, poor people, and video artists" under any one heading and to guarantee that it would be mostly experimental or mostly narrative-oriented.

Audiences walk out of film festivals for a variety of reasons: sometimes people are bored, sometimes they do not understand their relation to the material on the screen, often they have no context for viewing the work shown because they are not film students. I realize that Schulman's intention is far from cultivating elitism, but the uncompromising equation of experimental with subversive has left far too many interested but puzzled spectators completely in the dark.

ERRATA

The article "Some Like It Hot: The New Sapphic Cinema" [November 1992] incorrectly described author Judith Halberstam as teaching at UC Santa Clara. She teaches at UC San Diego. Also, the "Girls Night" showcase mentioned in the article was held in San Diego, not L.A. Lastly, the original events of the Leopold and Loeb story occured in 1924, not 1942 as stated in the piece.

In Christian Blackwood's obituary [January/February 1993], one of Blackwood's projects was misidentified due to an editing error. The correct title is *Signed: Lino Brocka*. In addition, *Yesterday's Witness* is a film he directed on the history of newsreels, not Israel as stated in the article. *The Independent* regrets these errors.

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ON THE OUTS WITH OSCAR

Academy Postpones Decision to Eliminate Shorts

When the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences voted in November to eliminate awards for short documentaries and live action shorts, Hollywood headlines screamed "ACAD EATS ITS SHORTS." Now the Academy may be eating its words.

Since the two categories were the first to be considered for elimination in 25 years, the Academy's decision took the industry by surprise. It especially surprised those whose careers have been made on the prestige an Academy Award for shorts has brought them.



The short film form was an ideal vehicle for Kenneth Branagh's *Swan Song*, an adaptation of Chekov's short play by the same name.

Courtesy Samuel Goldwyn

Jon Wilkman, president of the International Documentary Association, said the long-range planning committee that had recommended cutting the categories was out of touch with the short film industry. Some of the biggest names in Hollywood joined with filmmakers and critics to protest the move at the Academy's Board of Governors meeting in December. The zealous protest prompted a vote to delay the decision for one year.

Bruce Davis, the Academy's executive director, said that because the "fundamental question involves numbers in terms of theatrical distribution, more study has to be done on those figures." In turn, the Academy will conduct a thorough, year-long review. Robert Rehme, president of the Academy, will appoint a committee made up of board members and led by Short Films branch governor Saul Bass to re-examine the original decision more closely. At press time, committee members had not yet been selected.

Davis dismissed accusations that the Academy is interested only in high-profile Hollywood and awards-night viewership. "The decision was not based at all on that," he told *The Independent*. The board passed its original vote on the idea that the distribution figures for short films showed them to be "virtually non-existent in American theaters." In response, the Academy was bombarded with letters, phone calls, and full-page trade ads carrying several dozen powerful industry names, including Steven Spielberg, Francis Ford Coppola, and George Lucas, which attested to the vitality of short films.

Saul Bass, a 1968 short documentary Oscar winner for *Why Man Creates*, made an impassioned presentation at the December meeting. Bass's presentation was based on a four-page letter to the board from Frieda Lee Mock, a documentary filmmaker and two-time Academy nominee. The letter described short films as a "billion dollar business" that draws millions of paying theatergoers each year.

Mock refuted the misconception that shorts are shown primarily on television and no longer exist in traditional theaters. "Things have obviously changed since the 1940s, when every feature opened with a documentary, a newsreel, or a cartoon," she said. Mock went on to quote figures showing that shorts are still booked as added attractions at theaters across the country, such as the Landmark Theaters chain, which, with 93 screens in 50 theaters, exhibits over 40 live action shorts a year, including Kenneth Branagh's *Swan Song*. Other theater circuits, including UA Theaters and AMC Theaters, show short films when packaged by distributors or when the feature is comparatively short. For example, Jim Kellihan's live action short *If I Could* has run in multiplex theaters on 700 screens before an estimated 23-million theatergoers.

Davis, emphasizing the Academy's position, said that although these films are shown in traditional theaters, they are shown at odd hours and usually run no longer than the three-day minimum required for Academy qualification.

"If they qualify, they qualify," said Mock.

One of the main areas of short film that Mock cites as thriving is that of large format films such as Imax and Omnivision, which have hefty budgets and are seen by millions. Disney alone brings

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in 50-million visitors annually for shows like *Captain Eo*, a $20-million collaboration between Coppola and Lucas. Although no Imax film has yet won a short award, they are now eligible for consideration in their original form and do not have to be converted to 35mm, an expensive process which hindered entry in the past, according to Bass. "These films will become more of a factor in the future," he said.

Davis said the the committee plans to examine the larger question of the Academy's role in the changing field of short films. Ben Shedd, winner of an Oscar for his documentary *Flight of the Gossamer*, said he hopes the Academy will see its role as a major one. "I'm glad the Academy is giving the issue the attention and thought it needs," he added. "There are a great many Academy members who love short films and the art form, and they want the Academy to recognize that."

For this year anyway, makers of short films have won their battle, but whether they will win the war remains to be seen. "Certainly people will get upset when you break their rice bowls," Rehme said, and added that it may not be what anyone wants, but it is possible "an era of movie history has ended."

INGALISA SCHROBSDORFF

Ingalisa Schrobsdorff is a freelance writer living in New York City.

ITVS' TRIAL BY FIRE

The late 1980s was a jubilant time for independent film- and videomakers. After much rallying and lobbying on the part of the independent community, the Independent Television Service (ITVS), supported with funds administered through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, promised independents the two things they needed most: money to fund innovative projects and the promotional support necessary to get their work seen on the more than 300 public broadcasting venues throughout the U.S.

Now, however, nearly two years since CPB released ITVS's production funding and full operating funds, the service's programming efforts have produced few tangible results and, with the fire of right-wing Congressional leaders under its feet, ITVS is dancing to the tune of change: changes in the procedures of its annual Open Call program, changes in its previously status quo Request for Proposal (RFP) process, changes in staff and in leadership. But many members of the independent community, including some who have received funding from ITVS's $6-million annual programming budget, are concerned about whether the service is keeping its promises to independents and whether all this change is for the better.

In its first annual Open Call in 1991, ITVS provided nearly $3-million for 26 television projects, which varied in length, genre, and subject matter. Producers, with an average of $100,000 to $150,000 in ITVS funding at their disposal and the freedom to run their own shows, couldn't have been happier. "I thought I'd landed in heaven," recalls one recipient, who spoke on the condition of anonymity as did several other producers interviewed by *The Independent*. Throughout the first months of production, Open Call producers received not only financial support but encouragement from ITVS's staff as well. Now, however, the Edenic atmosphere is sprouting crabgrass. Fewer than one-third of the original projects have been completed and of those, the two submitted to PBS and the five to *POV* were rejected. In addition, several producers feel let down by ITVS's once-supportive support staff. "ITVS didn't have a clear sense of what to do with the projects when they were completed," says one producer. "We were led to believe they'd go to bat for us. Now we feel they are being extremely cautious and taking on the role of conservative gatekeepers."



ITVS did little to win over the field by funding just 13 projects at an average of $200,000 per project in 1992's Open Call. Especially since the same number of applicants—approximately 2,000—applied to the second Open Call as to the first. One insider says the Open Call process has come to be thought of in the field as a "beauty contest" that many independents refuse to take part in. The fact that of the 38 projects funded in the first two calls, 20 were from New York state and 9 from California also sparked concern among independents.

Last summer, Congress, concerned as well, passed an amendment to the Public Telecommunications Act of 1992 directing ITVS to provide funds to projects representing "the widest possible geographic distribution." The mandate led to one of two major changes in the 1993 Open Call process; funds will be divided among six geographic regions, and six corresponding review panels—composed of members primarily from within their own regions—will fund four to eight projects each. While most approve of the shift in focus from national to regional, few are as accepting of the second change: to impose a $100,000 cap for programs of an hour or more and $60,000 for half-hour programs. "You can't have the Open Call as trinkets to throw out to indies," says one angry producer. "There's no reason to keep people who apply to Open Call on the welfare level. Some programs need more money to carry out their concepts."

John Schott, executive director of ITVS, defends the cap, calling it "an experiment that will be used to demonstrate the vitality of low-budget productions."

Vitality is vital. But will PBS want the low-budget projects? Larry Daressa, co-director of California Newsreel and an ITVS board member, says it is clear from the first batch of completed projects that "Open Call probably won't be the core of ITVS's programming presence in the future. Instead the rationale for Open Call will be to develop the field." Although Daressa adds that future Open Call projects, which he foresees tackling basic issues such as healthcare, parenting, and death in innovative ways, may be difficult to program because of their nature as one-offs, "at least they'll say something important."

But with little or no product to air in primetime, ITVS has found itself in a predicament, which is why Schott, with board approval, hand picked New York-based Claypoint Productions, a team of three independent producers, to oversee a public affairs series tentatively titled *Declarations*. Schott says the $1.25-million, three-hour series will be completed this summer, and he hopes to get it on the air sometime this fall. The executive

Open Call funds supported Clay Walker's documentary *Post No Bills*, but some producers complain about ITVS's follow-through on the projects.

Photo: Clay Walker, courtesy filmmaker

director defends his decision to circumvent the RFP process and take matters into his own hands by saying RFPs take too long to turn around and that none of the series from ITVS's Focused Programming Initiative—including Television Families, Extended Play, and Generation—would be ready to air by the fall. Although the board insisted that independents be hired to produce the 12 segments of *Declarations*, which will feature prominent essayists discussing constitutional issues, Jackie Shearer, an independent producer and ITVS board chair, says the board "knew it would take heat for its decision."

And indeed it has. From the time the programming decision was made, rumors ran rampant about the project. Robyn De Shields, ITVS's new director of communications, planned to publicize the search for three senior producers and nine segment producers via trade publications in February. Instead, says Richard O'Regan, executive producer of the series, Claypoint will "primarily seek out people and ask if they are interested in working on the project." Some of the essayists have requested to work with specific producers, O'Regan adds. He plans to hire producers by the beginning of March and, at press time, the names of selected producers were unknown.

Shearer says the project "doesn't represent a trend that ITVS will target everything to primetime." In fact, she says, "we need to accept that ITVS is not for primetime." However, according to Lillian Jimenez, a member of the National Coalition of Independent Public Broadcasting Producers, which oversees ITVS, "Many people who received grants from the first Open Call are angered by the Claypoint project because they think their efforts will be eclipsed by ITVS's push to get the high-budget series on the air." Yet, she adds, "if people trusted the organization, they wouldn't feel so bad about [Schott's decision]. People somehow don't inherently trust the organization."

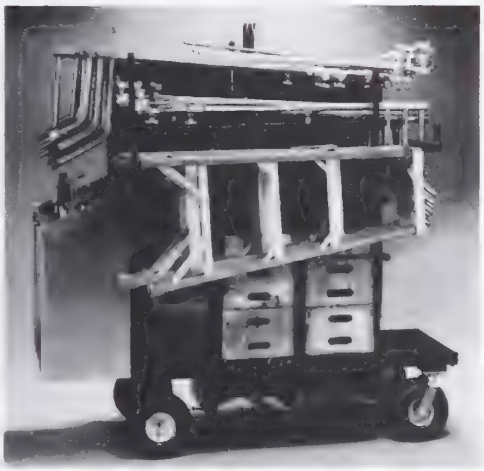
One of the reasons for the apparent mistrust, many agree, is the way in which Schott fired Beni Mateas, a strong supporter of independent work who was wooed away from her position as executive in charge of production at WNYC to work for ITVS. As Joyce Bolinger, a former ITVS board member and deputy commissioner of the Chicago Department of Cultural Affairs, wrote in a letter to board members shortly after the firing occurred, "Because there was no evaluation process and the decision to change directions in terms of Beni Mateas's position was so arbitrary, the trust we have placed in ITVS' leadership is called into question."



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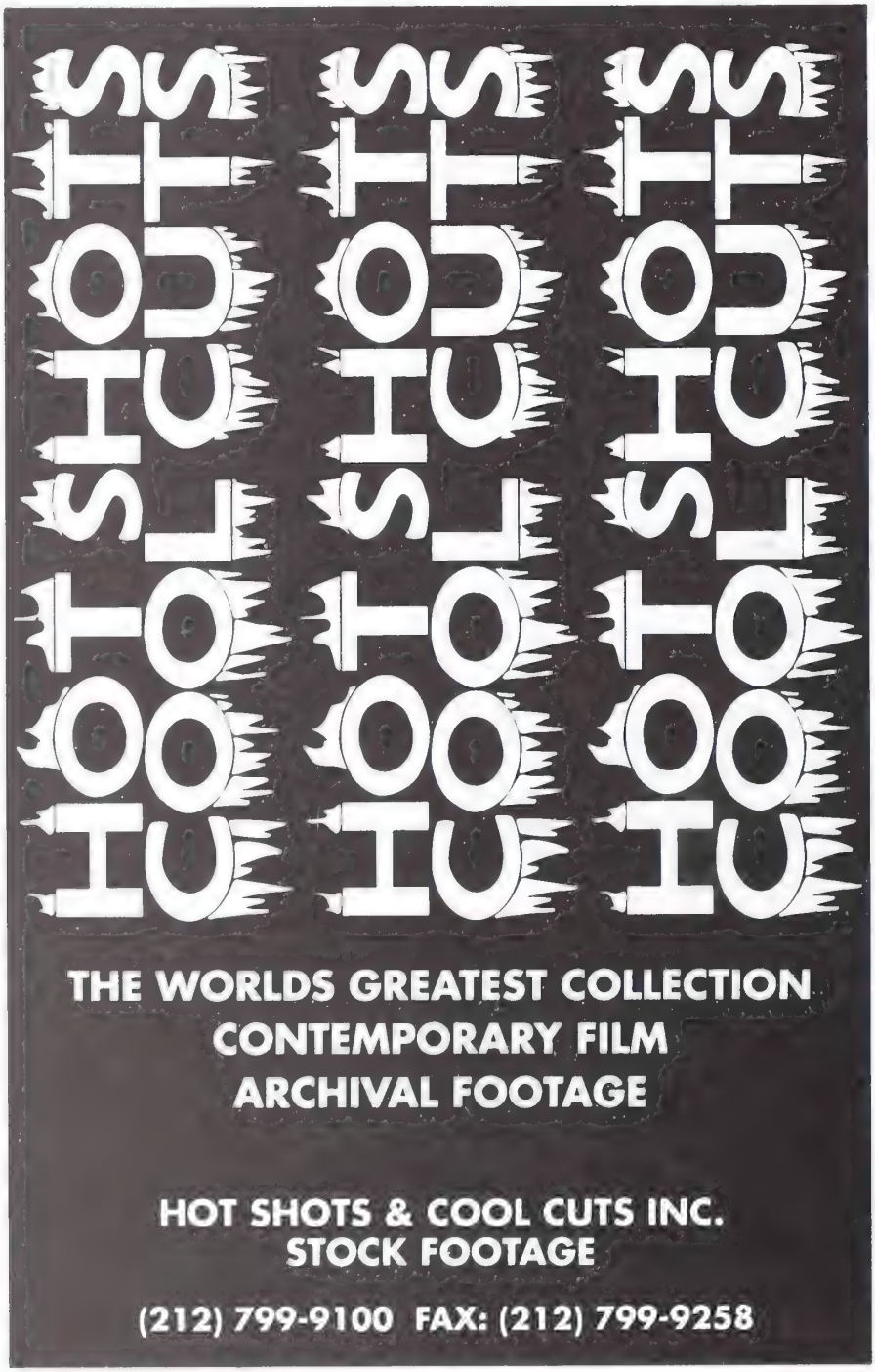
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"We're aware that it's an issue out there," Schott responds. "But since the dispute is not resolved yet, it may be best for me to speak directly to leaders in the field." Mateas also declined to comment on the matter.

Schott himself is leaving ITVS in June when his three-year tenure is up and will return to teaching, leaving a large leadership gap that a search firm is now trying to fill. "The field should be putting its energies into finding a new leader, not focusing on their individual problems," says Joan Shigekawa, program director for arts at the Nathan Cummings Foundation. "The field is unrealistic to see ITVS as a big mother—a nurturer—because it has a budget." Many independents, however, say they hope that in an effort to deliver to Congress as well as to its constituents, ITVS doesn't toddle into oblivion.

MICHELE SHAPIRO

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of The Independent.

MICHIGAN LAW STUDENTS SHUTTER EXHIBITION ON PROSTITUTION

When students at the University of Michigan Law School abruptly pulled the plug on a controversial multimedia exhibit that accompanied a symposium on prostitution last fall, they were unaware of the shockwaves such an action would cause. But since that day, Michigan video artist Carol Jacobsen, the exhibit's curator who said she considered the shutdown a blatant act of censorship, has voiced her anger in national publications, including *The New York Times*, the *San Francisco Weekly*, and the *Detroit News*. Although Jacobsen and the seven visual artists embroiled in the controversy may soon settle their differences with the university, the bitter debate that the incident stirred over issues of censorship, pornography, and freedom of speech has yet to be resolved.

"More and more [debate] will happen as more video artists become educated about what exactly is taking place," says Steve Johnson at the National Campaign for Freedom of Expression.

The facts of Jacobsen's case are as follows: last October, founders of a newly organized student publication at the University of Michigan Law School, *The Michigan Law Journal of Gender & Law*, sponsored a three-day conference called "Prostitution: From Academia to Activism." The conference speakers included many anti-pornography advocates, including University of Michigan law professor Catherine MacKinnon (an NBC commentator during the Clarence Thomas Senate hearings) and her longtime collaborator, Andrea Dworkin, a feminist author. MacKinnon and Dworkin together drafted and advocated legislation that would allow lawsuits to prohibit any sexually oriented entertainment that is deemed to "subordinate" women and that would permit anyone who feels "aggrieved" by such a work to

collect damages from its producers and distributors.

Initially the students had intended to present both sides of the anti-pornography debate at their conference, but many who have spoken out in favor of pornography refused to participate with their adversaries. "Their basic premises are so opposite that they don't get together," said Lisa Lodeen, a law student who helped to organize the exhibit told the *Detroit News*. Seeking diversity, the students asked local artist and prostitution rights activist Carol Jacobsen to organize a photo/video exhibit. "The whole point of Carol's work was to show prostitution through the prostitutes' eyes," said Sarah Greden, a student at the law school.

Jacobsen's exhibit, which included her own 55-minute video, *Street Sex*, a series of interviews with Detroit prostitutes, and a photo essay by New York photographer Paula Allen, was approved by student organizers. But a last-minute addition—a two-hour video compilation that included works by another five artists—never received a thumbs up, and its contents stirred controversy among attendees of the symposium shortly after it began.

At the center of the controversy was *Portrait of a Sexual Evolutionary*, a 26-minute video by New York-based video artist Veronica Vera. The video was filled with sexually explicit words, pictures, and performances that Vera has said are part of the language she uses to communicate. After a hastily called meeting with MacKinnon and other speakers, the students, who had not viewed the video, removed it.

In a letter to the editor of the *Michigan Daily*, Laura Berger, a second-year law student, explaining that invited speakers had "expressed fear for their personal safety. Some speakers had attended prior conferences where pro-pornography groups had shown pornography to incite protests. Such protests had resulted in the harassment of speakers," she added.

Jacobsen did not discover the compilation tape missing until the following day. Finding the tape gone, she reinstalled another copy, walked across the street where the conference was underway, and confronted the students. "I told them they couldn't just pick out a selected artwork and remove it from the exhibit," Jacobsen told the *New York Times* last November. "But they didn't seem to get it. They said it wasn't censorship; they were just trying to prevent people from getting their feelings upset. I said if they wished to censor any part they would have to censor the whole thing. They came back and said, 'Take it down.' And that's what happened."

Jacobsen quickly rallied for support and found it from Marjorie Heins of the American Civil Liberties Union Arts Censorship Project. Heins, representing the seven artists featured in Jacobsen's exhibit, immediately began trying to negotiate a settlement with the University of Michigan's law school. Heins declined to outline settlement terms, but said that "certainly the reinstallation of the exhibit would be a major remedy." At press time, Lee Bollinger, dean of the law school, had agreed to meet with Jacobsen to discuss arrangements for reinstalling the exhibit and holding a forum to coincide with it sometime this year. Jacobsen said he had also agreed to compensate the artists involved with $3,000, to be divided among them.



At the request of conference participants, University of Michigan Law School students removed a tape from Carol Jacobsen's video installation *Street Sex*, part of *Porn'im'age'ry: Picturing Prostitutes.*

Courtesy Carol Jacobsen

The ACLU is not the only organization backing Jacobsen. Protests against the alleged censorship have come from the College Art Association; PONY, a New York City prostitutes' rights group; the National Coalition Against Censorship; and the National Campaign for Freedom of Expression (NCFE).

Steve Johnson at the NCFE says Jacobsen's is one of a number of video censorship cases that his organization has recently spoken out against. Jacobsen, however, with her ability to attract media attention and garner support for her cause, is a role model for other artists facing censorship. "Carol knew how to go about getting help," he said. "Other people need to understand that process."

AMI WALSH

Ami Walsh is a Michigan-based freelance journalist who covered "Prostitution: From Academia to Activism" for the Ann Arbor News.

LABOR VIDEOS COST WEST VIRGINIA LIBRARIAN HER JOB

Certain public libraries have made a practice of banning books they deem inappropriate or obscene. Now that videos have also become an integral part of most public library systems in the United States, videomakers will have to contend with the same subjective judgement calls that authors have for years. According to Judith Krug, director of the Office of Intellectual Freedom at the American Library Association, many videos pulled from the shelves of public libraries in recent years have sexual themes, such as *Achieving Sexual Maturity*. Krug said that particular tape was the focus of a lawsuit filed by a Moral Majority leader in Washington State, who felt those who had borrowed the tape undermined the "healthy growth of children." The case was thrown out of court and declared a victory against the Moral Majority. Recently, however, a West Virginia librarian was forced to surrender her post for screening three labor-related videos.

The librarian, who spoke to *The Independent* on the condition of anonymity, said she worked at the St. Albans branch of the Kanahwa County Public Library system in West Virginia, where she exhibited a series of three Barbara Kopple films on Labor Day weekend of 1992. (Kopple is a graduate of the University of Charleston in West Virginia.) Titled "American Dreams: Labor in America," the program included *Locked Out in America, Voices From Ravenswood, Out Of Darkness: The Mine Workers Story*, and the Oscar award-winning *American Dream*. Several weeks after the series was screened, Linda Wright, the director of the Kanawha County Public Library system, informed the librarian responsible for arranging the program that she would be transferred to the Reference Department at the Charleston Public Library, one of six branches in the system, and would receive a $6,000 pay cut.

After a grievance hearing on December 6, the Kanahwa County Board of Directors voted against reversing the decision to transfer her from the St. Albans branch. The librarian who exhibited the Kopple films is now debating whether to file a lawsuit against the Kanahwa County Public Library. Her St. Albans post has since been filled.

Barbara Kopple, upon hearing of the incident, said, "It is shocking that the public library system would respond to a respected librarian's effort to bring new ideas and perspectives to the attention of the community with blatant punishment, simply because the ideas did not coincide with those of the library board." She added that the incident should be "a red flag not only to the people of St. Albans but to all people who take unrestricted, unbiased access to information though public libraries for granted."

The question as to why a branch librarian was

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Barbara Kopple's Oscar-winning *American Dream* was among the labor films that touched off controversy in West Virginia.

Courtesy filmmaker

suddenly transferred from St. Albans has not yet been publicly addressed. The librarian told *The Independent* she believes that she lost her job because the director of the county library and several county board members objected to the pro-labor sympathies of Kopple's *Locked Out*. The county's case against her did not begin on Labor Day, she said, but in March, 1992, when she wrote a pro-labor column about striking workers at a local corporation for the *Charleston Gazette*. In the article, the author argued, "This is not a strike. It is a lockout. Ravenswood Aluminum Corp. locked out 1,700 members of Local 5668 of the United Steelworkers of America rather than negotiate a contract." Last spring, the librarian arranged a public screening at St. Albans of Kopple's *Locked Out*. She claims her status at the library began to change following the initial screening. She was moved to different posts within the branch during the summer. Someone within the library filed an anonymous disciplinary action that accused her of using the library's telephone for professional reasons unrelated to her job. A summertime management audit of the entire library staff raised further questions about her performance, which in previous years was considered exemplary, the librarian's lawyer said.

Despite the incidents prior to the Labor Day screening, the county board insists its decision to transfer a branch librarian was not premeditated. However, one St. Albans board member who does not sit on the larger county board said the county's decision stemmed from its disapproval of an "unbalanced" series.

"This is the first time that after showing videos the board said I had to show both sides. The whole idea of the library is to have a marketplace of ideas and different points of view. I don't think that means that you have to show anti-labor films with pro-labor ones," the librarian argued.

The board member added that feelings were strong on both sides of the Ravenswood struggle and that ideological differences were probably behind the board's decision.

Krug emphatically agrees that library administrations around the country often make decisions on the basis of broad political agendas. However, she relates current problems of perceived censorship in individual libraries to the national economy. Krug said libraries are operating scared—like museums and public television stations. When they receive videotapes that risk provoking controversy, they simply refuse to purchase them, screen them, or both. Krug said she believes the situation will worsen in the post-Reagan/Bush era on account of mounting religious pressure.

CHARLES LYONS

Charles Lyons is completing a PhD dissertation on contemporary film censorship and protests at Columbia University.

NONPROFITS GRAPPLE WITH NEA COMPLIANCY AUDITS

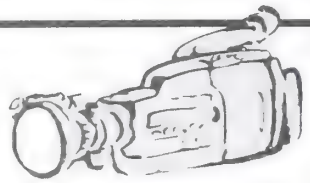
Organizations that receive National Endowment for the Arts grants totalling $25,000 or more (including fiscal sponsors) may be required to prove compliance with federal regulations and to account for those dollars in a more detailed manner than ever before. Aside from costing more money in accounting fees, the result for most smaller nonprofits is a more rigorous and time-consuming audit.

Circular A-133, issued by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) in March of 1990, mandates the new regulations that affect nonprofits as well as colleges, universities, and libraries. Prompted by the Senate Governmental Affairs Committee chaired by Senator John Glenn, (D-Ohio), OMB has standardized requirements across the federal government so that organizations receiving grants from the Institute of Museum Services or the National Endowment for the Arts must account for funds in the same way as a university receiving a grant from the National Science Foundation or a local government receiving a grant from the National Institute of Health. While Circular A-110 (which preceded and was amended by A-133) contains many of the same requirements, the attempt to standardize compliance requirements under A-133 has brought these issues more clearly into focus, and a number of nonprofit organizations are dealing with them for the first time.

While some are still unaware of the changes that affected most organizations at the end of fiscal year 1991, others are concerned. "The new regulations are not reasonable for smaller and mid-sized organizations," says Linda Mabalot, executive director of Visual Communications in Los Angeles.

What are the specifics of Circular A-133? It puts the burden of proof on the auditor or CPA, who generally prepares an organization's financial statement, by requiring them to certify that the organization has complied with all the terms and conditions of federal grants, including such provisions as civil rights laws, lobbying laws, the drug-free workplace laws, etc. If you are an organization that is affected by unionization, you must also prove that you have complied with union scale wages. If your grant was for fixed assets (i.e., equipment), those assets must be treated in accordance with federal guidelines. Your auditor must also verify that your final reports were filed on time, that your cash requests are traceable to expenses, and that you did not request funds before they were needed.

If the auditor finds that you have not met the standards, he or she is required to report any weaknesses in your "internal control structure" and the steps being taken to correct them. In the case of organizations who act as fiscal sponsors for individual film- and videomakers or other nonprofit groups, the auditor must verify that the sub-grantee has met the compliance standards. Perhaps most onerous is the requirement that all employees who are compensated in part by federal dollars file "time and effort" activity reports. These time sheets provide an auditor with the



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The compliancy audits have caused smaller nonprofits to dig deep into their shallow pockets and may cause other problems for those seeking fiscal sponsorship.

necessary documentation to prove compliance with the grant.

Organizations that already complete audited financial statements can expect to spend as much as several thousand dollars in additional accounting fees plus the staff time to file and prepare the necessary paperwork. For others, it may require a first-time audited financial statement, which can cost as much as $10,000. From a practical standpoint, organizations should make sure that their CPA or auditor is familiar with the requirements and should check with several firms or with colleagues to make sure that the fees being charged are reasonable.

The compliancy audits have caused smaller nonprofits to dig deep into their shallow pockets and may cause other problems for those seeking sponsorship. David Gerstein, executive director of the San Francisco Cinematheque, said that during the last fiscal year his organization agreed to act as a fiscal agent for a local arts group receiving an NEA grant. But he had to deny the group's request for fiscal sponsorship this year because accepting would have pushed his organization over the $25,000 threshold.

One financial manager who works with a number of different small- and mid-sized arts groups suggested that an NEA panel would do organizations a favor by giving grants of $24,000 instead of $25,000.

Learning to comply with the new regulations is a necessity. However, a bigger question remains unanswered: can anything be done to ease this burden on arts organizations, particularly smaller groups? While there is no clear answer, there appears to be some hope for an easing of the requirements. Six months ago the National Endowment for the Humanities made a formal proposal to OMB to raise the dollar threshold for compliance audits from $25,000 to $100,000. NEA endorsed the NEH proposal.

There has been no response from OMB, but it is currently conducting a study on the effects of Circular A-128, which sets standards for state and local governments. A-128 was the model for A-133. The outcome of the A-128 study will most likely affect changes to A-133. Also Circular A-133 clearly states that there will be a policy review three years from the date of issuance, that is March 1993. An OMB analyst said that the agency had received several proposals to raise the dollar threshold for compliance audits, some to $100,000, others to $200,000 and indicated there was sympathy at OMB for such a change.

While the Reagan/Bush years have caused considerable difficulties for arts groups, these new requirements appear to have little to do with the political forces that have been trying to restrict or cut arts funding. After all, from the Bush administration's point of view, no one could be considered more "politically correct" or ideologically pure than outgoing NEH chair Lynne Cheney, whose agency took the initiative to support an increase in A-133's $25,000 threshold. Nonetheless, as Ted Berger, executive director of the New York Foundation for the Arts, points out, A-133 is one of "all kinds of encroachments" that have made managing arts groups more difficult.

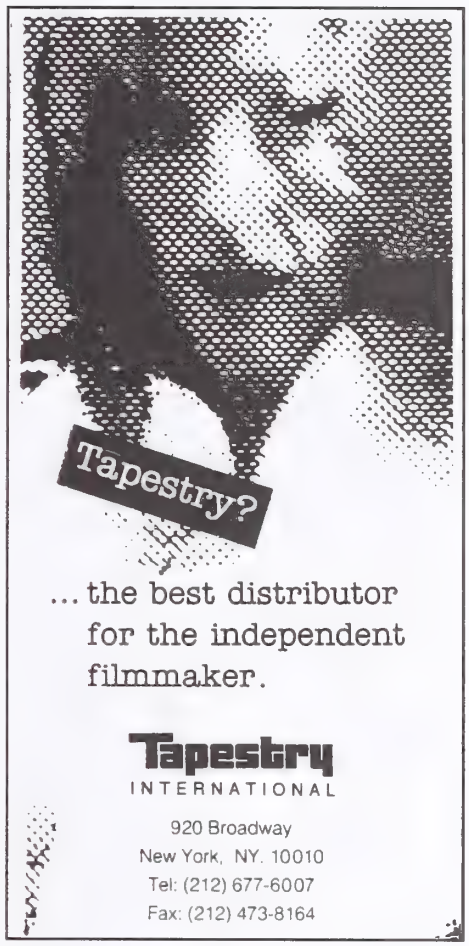
Berger says he agrees with many other arts service organizations that the political realities of arguing for arts groups alone to receive special consideration or exemptions from these requirements would not bring the desired results. The perception that arts groups are getting tax dollars and frittering them away in irresponsible ways, though clearly erroneous, is simply too prevalent.

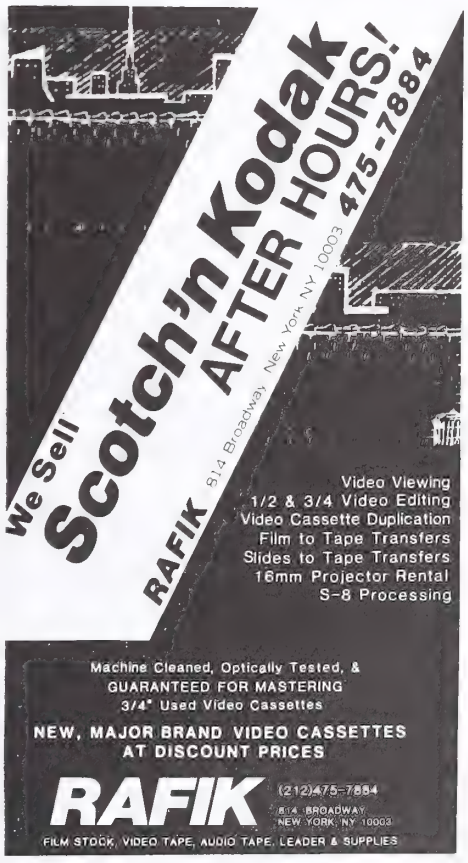
A much more effective strategy, some say, would be to forge ties with other nonprofit groups outside the arts that find the restrictions onerous and construct an argument to increase the compliance audit threshold to at least $100,000. A broad-based effort directed at OMB and the appropriate Congressional committees might bring results, athough even without such efforts, OMB may be on the road to change.

To get more details on the requirements and to understand the fine points of the regulations, organizations can order a publication issued by the President's Council on Integrity and Efficiency, Standards Committee, *PCIE Position Statement No. 6, Questions and Answers on OMB Circular A-133* (stock number 041-001-00374-6) for $4.50 from the U. S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents, Mail Stop; SSOP, Washington, D.C. 20402-9328. Also available is a new publication from the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants titled *Statement of Position 92-9: Audit of Non-Profit Organizations which receive Federal Funds.* You can order it for $10, plus $2.75 postage and handling, by calling 800-862-4272.

SUSAN WYATT

Susan Wyatt is an independent arts advocate who is a member of the Arts Action Coalition. She is the former executive director of New York's Artists Space.





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TWO DATABASE SERVICES HAVE MEDIAMAKERS WIRED

Industry professionals who find that "independent" just as often means "isolated" can now take solace in their computer terminals. Arts Wire, the two-year-old brainchild of the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA), and Video Network, a Portsmouth, Rhode Island-based firm, both offer what some might call the next generation of CompuServe: industry-specific electronic databases available to anyone with a computer modem for around $20 a month. Sources say that both databases, equipped with e-mail, classifieds, and news tips, offer a way to talk shop around the clock *and* to stay tapped into developments in the film and video industries.

"It really does build a budding sense of community," says NYFA spokesman David Green. "It combines the best of a simple bulletin board service with the ability to contact and share information within the discipline of video."

Arts Wire has attracted some 120 organizations and individuals, including AIVF/FIVF, to its Hot Wire (a news summary, updated three times weekly); Artswirehub (a discussion "area" for users to exchange views and ideas); and Money (a treasure chest of grant deadlines and other opportunities). The database is also indexed and its membership included in the online directory.

The National Association of Artists' Organizations maintains a running file of reports from industry conferences. It's so exhaustive, says Green, "if you stayed off the system for a week then came back on and downloaded everything, you'd have about 100 pages of information."

"Arts Wire is still a relatively new system," says filmmaker Eric Theise. "There aren't that many film sources on it. But there are good industry opportunities in the Money section."

David Kiklis, president of Video Network and an industrial film director of 19 years, first got the idea for his database two years ago, after making several trips into New York City to find makeup artists, camera people, studio technicians, and other talent for a video he was directing. "If you're right in the middle of the video business, it's fine," says Kiklis. "But outside major cities there is no community in this industry; you may have three or four video people in your entire area and no resources at your disposal." Conversely, he adds, a video mecca like New York can give independents "info overload" and produce a need to share positive experiences.

Enter Video Network, which, like Arts Wire, comes with two-way electronic mail, classifieds, message posting, and an expansive industry library consisting of music files, animations, and software demos, which can be downloaded to computer memory, then to printers.

Kiklis runs his entire operation with two staffers and several IBM 486s working a total of 16 modems; Arts Wire runs off MetaNet, a computer conferencing system. Customer access to these systems requires even less hardware: "Most per-

sonal computers are capable of online communication with little or no additional investment. Laptops often have modems or communication software built right in," reads the recent *Arts Wire News*, a background newsletter on the service.

Fees fall well on the reasonable side—"about the same as you'd spend for a nice dinner for two," says Kiklis, who charges $99 annually and a small connection charge. Arts Wire costs $6.75/hour from most parts of the country through SprintNet, plus a flat network charge of $15/month; individual subscriptions range from $3 to $15/month, organizational subscriptions $5 to $25, and institutional subscriptions $1,000 to $2,000. An average use of two hours per month is common.

"What's good about these systems is that they are not disposable like faxes," says Theise. "Especially on conferencing systems, once you put information out there, it stays there."

For information on Arts Wire, contact David Green at (212) 233-3900, ext. 212. David Kiklis at Video Network is (401) 848-9454.

JEFF STIMPSON

Jeff Stimpson is a New York-based freelance writer.

STEPHEN HARVEY: 1949-1993

Stephen Harvey, an associate curator in the Department of Film at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, died on January 1, 1993 at age 43 of pneumonia and AIDS-related complications.

Harvey organized major exhibitions on Vincente Minelli, Vittorio De Sica, and Joseph Mankiewicz, among others. A respected author and historian, Harvey wrote a definitive study of Minelli and the MGM studio system, as well as essays and critical commentary for the *New York Times*, the *Village Voice*, *Film Comment*, and *Premiere*. He also wrote the documentary film *Sanford Meisner: The Theater's Best Kept Secret*, which aired on PBS's *American Masters*. Contributions in Stephen's name can be made to the Stephen Harvey Memorial Fund, c/o Mary Lea Bandy, Department of Film, Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St, New York, NY 10019.

SEQUELS

The previously defunct **Experimental Television Center (ETC)**-sponsored Residency Program will continue through June and possibly thereafter, thanks to funds from the New York State Council on the Arts. For more information, contact Ralph Hocking, program director, at (607) 687-1423.

✣ ✣ ✣

The video by Bob Hercules that features **Stoney Burke's interviews with Republicans** of note ["Independents Lose Out on Election Coverage," January/February 1993] was allegedly censored by PBS stations, but you can purchase the uncut version of the *The 90's* series segment from Subtle Communications at (800) 522-3688.

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AUSTRIAN ODYSSEY

Film Meets Politics at Three European Festivals

KAREN ROSENBERG

There's nothing new about culture as politics in Europe; what's different these days are the topics that culture is raising. A retrospective and symposium on Black American Cinema held last October in Austria, for example, raised three issues Europeans are now confronting—or avoiding—in their own countries: racism, poverty, and homelessness. By reviewing America in the year of Columbus, Europeans are beginning to come to terms with their preconceptions. One Austrian was surprised at the emotional numbness of the main character in Charles Burnett's fictional *Killer of Sheep*. Blacks, she thought, were very open about their feelings. Another believed Marco Williams' autobiographical documentary about his family of single mothers, *In Search of Our Fathers*, concerned a specifically black phenomenon. What was so good about this festival was that such ideas could be discussed in a sincere and amicable fashion. Burnett and Williams responded that the black community mirrors the human condition and cautioned against looking to African American directors only for information about the U.S.-black experience.



Marco Williams' autobiographical documentary, *In Search of Our Fathers*, raised questions and consciousness about the African American experience when it screened at the Graz festival.

Courtesy filmmaker

Many people probably came to these films and discussions for something more general: surprises. This series was part of Styrian Autumn, an avant-garde arts festival held annually in the Austrian city of Graz. So it attracted those tired of standard Hollywood fare, which this retrospective, with its focus on independent directors, avoided. "In general, independent filmmakers have trouble breaking into the Austrian market, and black independents almost never get here, except in film festivals," explained one of the organizers of the retrospective, Franz Grabner. There was stiff competition from other events in the Styrian Autumn schedule, but an excellent film catalog probably helped draw viewers, and local film critics told their readers why they should attend both the talks and films by fathers of Black American Cinema like William Greaves and Marvin Van Peebles. Considering the scope of the festival (the 50-plus films and videos, including European premieres and rarities, made it the largest retrospective on this topic anywhere to date), it deserved much more press. But Vienna still snubs the provinces, like the Graz area, and Germany slights Austria, and the organizers lacked the budget to court international journalists.

As is usual for cultural events in Europe, most of the support came from public funds, but Grabner said the roughly $110,000 raised from all sources was only three quarters of what was actually needed. The Austrian Ministry of Education and Art contributed, he said, "a pitifully small amount compared to our needs and efforts." So enthusiastic college students ended up working long hours for little pay. It seems as if bureaucrats in this country still associate film with entertainment, and since movies aren't seen as serious, retrospectives don't get the prestige and money awarded to classical music or theater. Yet from Julie Dash's work to Marlon Riggs', there was more than enough in this festival to satisfy the requirements of both art and education, and I'm curious to see if this year's success in Graz affects next year's budget.

✣ ✣ ✣

An index of Austria's political and social conservatism will be its funding of the Women's Film Initiative, which put on a festival called Murderesses in the fall of 1992. The organizers, five women, chose this provocative title deliberately to attract attention to their first large event and to their thesis: that women who kill with intent are breaking out of female passivity. A year-and-a-half of planning yielded a rich array of offerings open to both men and women: films and videos by male and female directors from a variety of genres,

periods, and countries—many of them Austrian premieres; literary readings; and lectures on murderesses in film, history, and mythology. In part because Hollywood has recently produced a spate of films on this theme, the festival was generally reported with enthusiasm in feminist and film magazines and in Austrian newspapers. A sour note was sounded, however, when a journalist unearthed the fact that one lecturer/filmmaker had been imprisoned in 1989 in Germany on suspicion of association with a terrorist group.

The particular seminars and workshops for-women-only attracted more controversy in the press. What really got the goat of some journalists was the most popular workshop: an eight-hour session on the use of pistols and revolvers, with hands-on practice. Three male journalists used the festival as an opportunity to criticize the Minister for Women's Affairs and the head of Vienna's Office for Culture (both women), who gave their official support as well as public funds to the event. Antonia Cicero, one of the festival organizers, argues that men's use of weapons in war and hunting hardly raises an eyebrow; in fact, a former Austrian president is an honorary trustee of the shooting gallery where the workshop took place. The goal of the workshop, she told me, was to let women see what it's like to leave their traditional roles, not to encourage all women to carry weapons. But she is concerned about rumors that the director of Vienna's Office for Culture regrets having cosponsored the festival, because the group wants to put on a biannual women's film festival in Vienna, like the ones in Créteil in France and in Dortmund and Cologne in Germany. This can't be done without public funds. Private companies were approached for support for the Murderesses festival, but only in-kind donations (like stationery supplies and printing services) were forthcoming. "Apparently firms are still reluctant to fund cultural events and, when they do, they want large and prestigious ones—and we weren't that big," said Cicero. "Also, I think there's still a fear of being associated with a feminist project, and many people [in business] were put off by the name."

Austria needs the Women's Film Initiative to bring new images and theories to feminist and film circles, as well as to viewers outside those target groups. Currently most feminist projects here are in the social service area, not the arts. Politicians, however, may prefer to fund a less feisty women's cultural organization, one that won't bring them negative press. Reinhard Pyrker resigned in March 1992 as codirector of Vienna's main film festival, the Viennale, in part because he felt the head of Vienna's Office for Culture had interfered with the planning of the festival and was determining what the city's political culture would be. He argues, in essence, that in Austria you play the politicians' game, or else. Will the case of the Women's Film Initiative substantiate his thesis?



Egon Humer's documentary, *Guilt and Remembrance* raises questions about the official posts and honors given in Austria to unrepentant Nazis, such as former SS doctor Sigbert Ramsauer.

Courtesy Prisma Film Wien

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The fall 1992 Viennale, planned by the new festival directors, Wolfgang Ainberger and Alexander Horwath, was a somewhat larger affair than Pyrker and Werner Herzog's 1991 event, with more theaters for screenings and a corresponding increase in the number of films and viewers. The service it provides for the Viennese is indisputable: this festival, like others in Austria, brings in many good films that will never play commercially here. But international film critics found relatively little they hadn't seen elsewhere, and if the Viennale can't get premieres and doesn't offer prizes, then it needs more creative programming to become newsworthy. Its Robert Bresson retrospective was not ground-breaking, but the appended series of films with some relationship to his work was a thought-provoking touch. I found the retrospective on Boxing in Film rather forced as an organizing principle—Black American Cinema and Murderesses are more compelling themes, more likely to put Austria back on the map as a significant place for film culture.

What activated my curiosity were the Austrian films that rarely make it to the big festivals. I wanted to see what's given Austrian experimental works an international reputation. (The work of the filmmaking duo PRINZGAU/podgorschek, which plays with the opposition of structure and chaos, has been touring the U.S. recently.) Henriette Fischer's feature-length *The Woman Before Me*, a daughter's attempt to comprehend her mother's suicide, would have benefitted by a less explicit voiceover narration, but it had some brilliant moments, like documentary interviews with experts who decode the records that fix a life: a judge's divorce decision, a union contract, an autopsy.

I was especially glad that the Viennale screened Egon Humer's strong documentary *Guilt and Remembrance, Questions Put to Austrian National Socialists*, which Austrian TV confined to a late-night slot. In it, four octogenarians, emboldened by their age and German unification, reveal why they played a leading role under Hitler. It's illegal to disseminate Nazi ideology here, and though that law isn't often enforced, one of Humer's interviewees has in fact been charged for what he said in front of the camera. Would that their words could be dismissed as the last of a dying generation. The dichotomy between "us" and "them" ("I don't want them to intrude into my own sphere. And not into our politics either," or "My sentiments are national, my sentiments favor my own race, it is dearer to me than any other") is echoed in Humer's next documentary, a fascinating study of youth gangs in Vienna called *Running Wild*, which got a prominent place in the Viennale schedule. There, when one young man declares, "Foreigners are free to carry on their culture, but..." his fellow gang-member adds, "They can do that at home, not in the middle of the street, where the Au..., where we're walking around. As I said, then I feel like a tourist in my own country."

When *Guilt and Remembrance* was broadcast in Austria, some journalists expressed their concern that the film would spread and sup-

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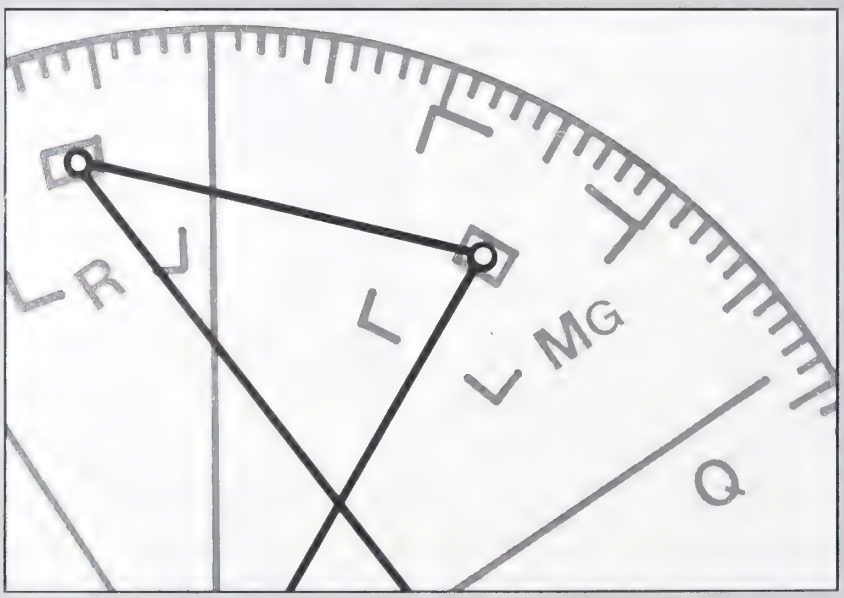
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port neo-Nazi tendencies. Although Humer uses archival material to contradict his interviewees, he includes no commentary which directly challenges them, and relies instead on viewers' knowledge, intelligence, and decency. It's precisely this confidence in the populace that is diminishing in Austria these days, as artists and intellectuals express their alienation from their right-leaning fellow citizens.

In this context, the symposia attached to Austrian festivals are a heartening phenomenon: film is providing a comfortable, inviting forum for the discussion of race, gender, and nationality—central issues for the country as well as the world.

Karen Rosenberg's articles on film have recently appeared in the books Women & Animation *(British Film Institute) and* Die Wirklichkeit der Bilder, Der Filmemacher Hartmut Bitomsky *(edition filmwerkstatt Essen).*

Vienna's First Environmental Festival

"All power to the machines, abolish people!" was spray-painted on a wall near Vienna's first environmental film festival, which was held over four days in October. Recently, sophisticated environmentalists, including graffiti artists, have deviated from the old scare tactics, which may well freeze us, and gotten us to join together in laughter. Public service announcements, like the one with a fish in a toilet bowl and the caption "The Danube starts here!" and documentaries like *Jungle-Burger* (1985), Peter Heller's satire about McDonald's, are educational tools. But Vienna Environmental Film Days '92 demonstrated that irony is now part of the curriculum.

One could see a pedagogical thrust in this festival. First of all, it was held in an adult education center—one known for its openness to progressive causes and to film. (A yearly Jewish Film Festival also takes place there.) And 20,000 copies of the festival program were sent to schools, adult education centers, and universities to encourage educators to come and see the best media on ecology. Many of these works—chiefly documentaries and animation—are shown rarely if ever in Austria, so teachers need to be acquainted with them. During this first year, almost all of the films were German-language, but the organizers are interested in broadening the festival's scope in the future. While the Oekomedia festival in Freiburg, Germany, premieres new productions for distributors, the Vienna Environmental Film Festival is reaching outside of film circles. Afternoon workshops for school kids were booked within days after the programs were mailed out. Next time, there could be more such workshops.

For the teenagers, as well as for adults, panels of German and Austrian experts were invited to stimulate dialogue. VOX umwelt media, the three-year-old nonprofit that organized the festival, did not mind provoking controversy by bringing together contrary viewpoints. Its founder, the 33-year-old lawyer-turned-media activist Herbert Schneider, said, "We think that if you are trying to educate the public, you can't do without film anymore. But, on the other hand, you shouldn't think it can do the job by itself. Our idea is to put films into a large framework, so they get discussed." The same antagonism to passivity can be seen in the choice of topics. Said Schneider, "Ozone was all over the papers this summer, but by fall it's out—till next summer. So we thought, 'Aha, October's just the time to raise this theme again.'" By interpreting the mission of a film festival broadly to include such sessions as Grassroots Initiatives and Utopias-in-Practice, VOX again promoted activism as well as knowledge.

But playing politics isn't easy. "It's now clear to us that it's important which public figures you get to attend," confessed Schneider. "When the Social Democratic Party heard that [Ecology Minister] Feldgrill-Zankel, who's from the Austrian People's Party, was invited, they complained that no one from *their* party was making an official appearance. We didn't do that on purpose: we had tried to get the head of the Vienna Office for Ecology, who's a Social Democrat, but he wasn't free." VOX can't afford to make too many politicians too angry, since most of the approximately $64,000 it raised for the festival came from public sources, and it wants more public funds to set up an office and a nonprofit distribution service to provide videos on environmental issues at affordable prices to community groups and educational institutions across the country.

Private sponsors bring other headaches. This year VOX published a paid ad from Siemens in its program, although the company is heavily involved in the nuclear industry. "Our first priority was to scratch together the money for this public event, especially since it was our first, but we decided that next year we'd look carefully into whom we want to collaborate with," said Schneider.

For more information, contact: VOX umwelt media, Tendlergasse 7/12, A-1090 Vienna, Austria; tel: (43) 1-408-4346; fax: (43) 1-408-0325.

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Of the works screened at Vienna's first environmental film festival, such as Monika Stuhl's *With a Probability Bordering on Certainty*, many are rarely if ever shown in Austria.

Courtesy filmmaker

GROWING PAINS

The 14th Independent Feature Film Market

JAMES MCBRIDE

For the past 14 years, the Independent Feature Film Market (IFFM) in New York has provided filmmakers, buyers, agents, distributors, festival directors, and other industry representatives with a focused, week-long forum on the U.S. independent film market. Sponsored by the New York-based Independent Feature Project (IFP), the market includes panel discussions, screenings of features, shorts, and works-in-progress, a script library, and an atmosphere which, more or less, facilitates contact and exposure between filmmakers and the people who buy and distribute films.



Can do: a filmmaker vies for attention at the Independent Feature Film Market

Photo: Gary Pollard, courtesy IFP

While the IFFM seems to do a reasonably good job of getting interested parties together, some questions have come up in the last few years regarding the policies of the IFP regarding the market's timing, eligibility requirements, entry costs, and the number of U.S. versus foreign films represented.

Traditionally running right after the Toronto Film Festival and concurrent with the New York Film Festival, this year the IFFM was held from September 20 to 27, shoe-horned in between those two gatherings. The idea behind this change was to lure down to New York foreign buyers who were already in North America for the Toronto festival. But veteran IFFM-goers noticed there were fewer European buyers this year, an observation confirmed by Catherine Tait, executive director of the IFP, who cites the worldwide recession as one inhibiting factor. "I think this [scheduling] may have made it a little hard on distributors who went to both [Toronto and New York Film Festivals]," she admits. "This year we aggressively linked ourselves to the Toronto Film Festival and actually did cross-promotions with it. Toronto ended on Friday and we started on Monday. For buyers coming in from abroad it was easy for them to come straight down to New York. We are still running concurrent with the press screenings for the New York Film Festival. But I don't think it's as bad as last year, when we were right on top of it."

According to Tait, IFFM is the first market of the season for a majority of American film producers. "We are the first look for a number of festivals, including Berlin, Rotterdam, and Munich," she says. "If they don't come to the market, they come during the summer and screen films. Sundance is obviously an important festival, too. It is the launchpad for many films, and we are the place Sundance comes to find a lot of those films. In terms of the distribution cycle, it will take a good year-and-a-half for most of these films to get any kind of theatrical release. And we are the beginning of the cycle."

While most market attendees agree that the market provides a rich and varied cross-section of buyers and sellers, there is some consternation over the frantic pace of screenings and the cramped accomodations at the Angelika Film Center. "The market is a little unorganized," says Harold Warren, whose company, Forefront Films, handles features and documentaries for overseas markets. Nonetheless, Warren found it useful. "We picked up a script at last year's market and have seen some things this year that we like and can probably get." Warren also indicated that the market's emphasis on developing filmmakers helps expose buyers to new and innovative talent they might not otherwise see. "In general there are some very good films here. Works-in-progress are always a little hard to judge," he says. "But sometimes you have to take a leap of faith and use your own instincts."

Tait admits that the number of people in attendance has "packed out" Angelika's facilities and that the IFP is exploring other venues around town. But she says the options are limited. "It is very hard to find all of the attributes of the Angelika, with its beautiful lobby space and six screens with a single projection booth," she says. "It is also very expensive for us to be here. With 350 screen-



Film posters change daily on the IFFM bulletin board at the Angelika Film Center.

Photo: Gary Pollard, courtesy IFP

ings, we want to do it all in one location. Apart from one or two other venues, there are not that many places we can go."

Although billed primarily as an American venue, the representation of non-U.S. films at IFFM is high. Since IFFM is limited in the number of works it can include, more foreign films means fewer U.S. films—a fact that particularly disconcerts those American independents who are turned away. The foreign programming component began in 1991 under the previous market director, Sandy Mandelberger. That year IFFM rolled out its "New Voices" section, in which a different country was highlighted each day, with four to six features screened and a panel discussion each afternoon. "Last year we had 45 foreign features, this year we have 25," says Tait. The New Voices sidebar was scaled back to four days. "As far as competing for screening spots, we did reduce the number foreign films to allow the maximum number of American features that we could accommodate," she acknowledges. "I think we've come up with a happy balance here." As Tait explains, "We feel it is important for American filmmakers to be in touch with what is going on in the rest of the world. The independent film community is very international. U.S. filmmakers get a lot of funding from Europe and one of the ways we attract those kinds of relationships is by having European films here."

For the third year in a row IFFM featured a selection of scripts-in-development. IFP also set up a system at the market through which screenwriters who paid to be in the market's script library could consult with professionals to improve and/or better position their pieces for sale. Tait says her organization is not able to track whether any works from previous markets have gone into production. But she did confirm that the script library is well trafficked during the market and lists are kept on the number of people who come to read them. "Scripts are the hardest sell," she says. "We work very closely with screenwriters to make sure this is a valuable service for them. Last year we did a survey and found about eight percent of the writers got some kind of agent interest from the market."

Collin Stewart, who describes his script *Expert Dragon Gunner* as a *Platoon* meets *Top Gun* action-thriller, says the IFFM is the only logical place he knows to market his script. "I'm looking for an agent for my movie, and this is simply one of the best places to do that. You can either go to L.A. or New York, and I happen to live close to New York. It is an excellent forum for screenplays."

Bill Blum's script *First Date, Last....* appeared at last year's market and, as a result, was recently optioned by Forefront Films. He is pleased that someone picked up his piece, but realistic about the process of getting it into production. In general, the bulk of films and scripts offered at this year's market seemed to strive for commercial acceptance, and Blum's piece is no exception. "It is a commercially oriented story, so that should help. But I am aware of the considerable time, money, and luck that goes into getting a picture actually made. I'm just keeping my fingers crossed and hoping something happens."

It also takes some luck and a certain amount of money to get into the IFFM. Typically, a film market is open to anyone who pays—a basic distinction from juried or curated festivals. Although Tait says no curatorial judgment is at play in the selection process (except for foreign films), the IFP does make curatorial decisions when the allotted number of screening slots has been exceeded.

"Any film that is submitted [before] our deadline is considered acceptable if it falls within the standards of genre or format," she explains. "For example, if a film is technically ready to be shown to an audience, it will be accepted at the market. But a number of films get sent in such rough shape that we tell the filmmaker it would be to their disadvantage to show it at this time. Obviously, we can only show a finite number of films within six days on six stages. It puts us in the position of turning away films or saying to filmmakers 'Your film is something we do not think will be easily marketed or realistically have an audience.' That's when there is some curatorial judgement."

One must join IFP or a regional affiliate before submitting work to the market. Membership to IFP runs $75 for individuals. On top of that, entry fees run $250 for scripts, $325 for works-in-progress and shorts, and $375 for features, with a $50 late fee for submissions after July 2. Tait says people whose works are not accepted will get their money back, minus a $25 administration fee. (The IFP membership fee is not refunded.) She also mentioned that filmmakers and writers who get entries in during the early summer get a reduction in prices and will minimize their chances of having problems at the last moment.

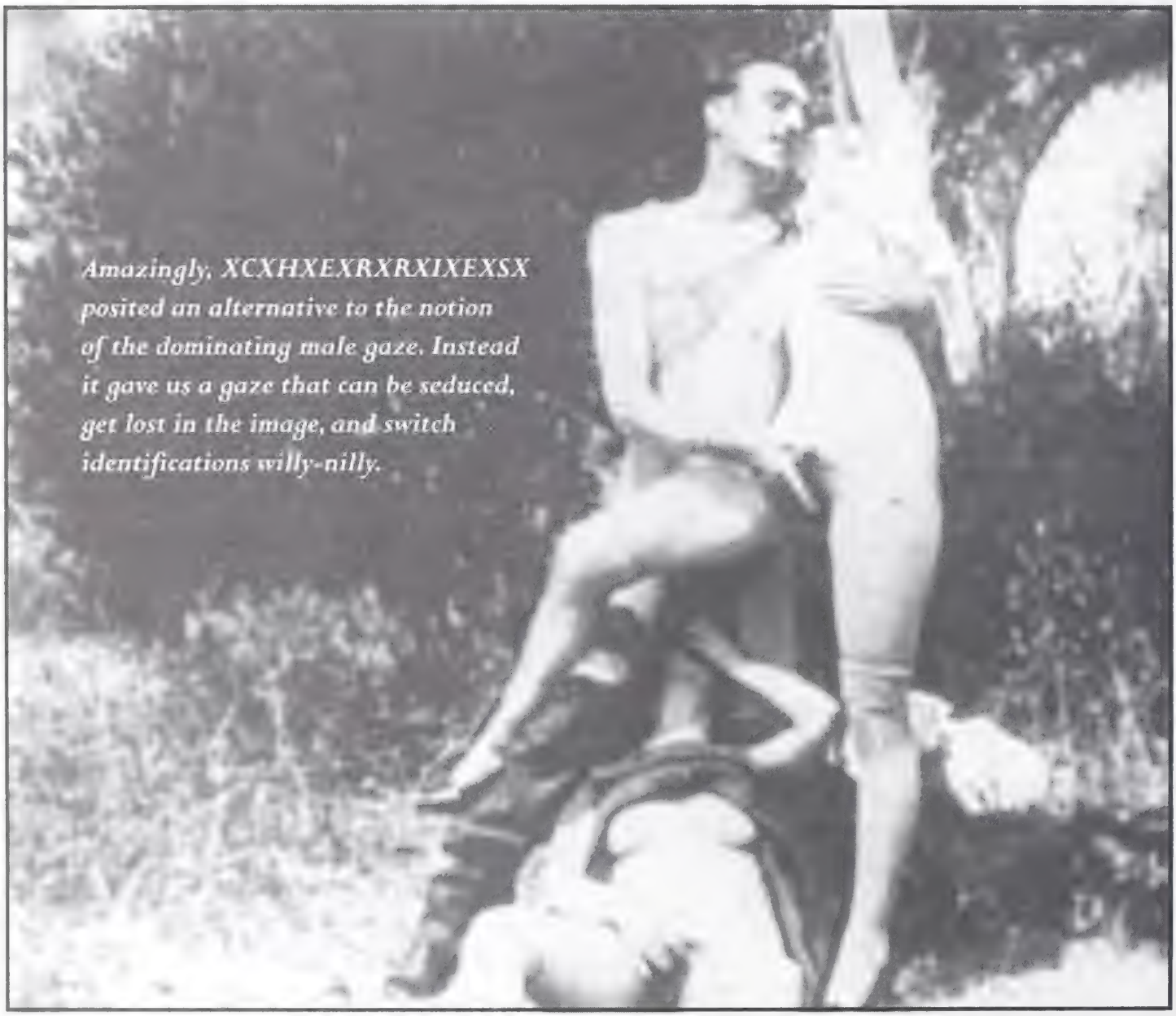
For the most part, filmmakers seem pleased to be able to show the results of their work at IFFM. "We came here with somewhat limited expectations," says Dorne Pentes, director of *The Great Unpleasantness*, a work-in-progress. "I was here last year with a short film, so I've been through the ringer once. We really didn't expect to sign a major deal, but mainly to make connections, meet people, get questions answered, and figure out where we want to send our film and how we want to get it out. So far we've met with a number of people who I hope are interested in our project."

"Filmmakers who come here are obviously expecting to meet people that they wouldn't otherwise meet," says Andy Hudson, writer, producer, and director of an eight-minute short titled *Casting Call*, "either because they don't have the ability or the resources to locate those people, or they wouldn't know what to do when they met them anyway. The way I look at this business, it has nothing to do with odds, it has to do with your ability as an individual to be able to come across and communicate whatever it is you have to communicate. This sort of atmosphere makes it much simpler to approach someone. People need to put out the effort; you have to do what's required."

James McBride is a freelance writer and film/video producer based in New York City.

Here's Gazing at You

A New Spin on Old Porn Exposes Gender and Generation Gaps



XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX (1980) by Ken Jacobs

Courtesy Anthology Film Archives

LAURA U. MARKS

THE AUDIENCE AT THE 38TH ROBERT FLAHERTY SEMINAR WAS already a bit restless and irritable by the time Ken Jacobs' experimental film *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* (1980) unspooled. *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX*, as described by Jacobs in a handout, is "an intensive examination and bringing to life of a very small amount of film material originally photographed circa 1920; selections from a French pornographic short." That screening last August brought more than the vintage film to life: the volatility of the audience's response had as much to do with seventies formalist filmmaking as with pornography. The screening sparked discussions about generational and gender differences that reveal much about where we, the independent film "community," are today—what divides us and what connections are possible.

The screening of *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* utilizes a projection apparatus of Jacobs' invention called the Nervous System. The title *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* visually mimics the end result. Two projectors advance identical copies of the original porn film, called *Cherries*, frame-by-frame, while the blades of a propellor alternately block them. One projector is stationary. The other the filmmaker manipulates so that the two images overlap, producing flicker and a three-dimensional effect. The result is that the five-minute film fragment is stretched into a two-hour film performance.

In other words, we viewed a vintage porn film, which was both coy and explicit, for two hours, in what was not exactly slow motion because of the intense flicker. For the duration Jacobs engaged his apparatus in what must have been an exhausting performance. At least a third of the audience walked out at various points. These boycotters were divided roughly into those who objected to the film because it was (based on) pornography and those who felt their time was wasted watching avant-garde film. When the post-screening discussion began, Jacobs was immediately on the defensive. For the first 15 or 20 minutes he talked about the film's formal qualities and how the Nervous System works. He seemed intentionally obfuscatory. Many participants wanted to discuss content, but Jacobs headed these discussions off. Finally one of the younger women in the audience told Jacobs that she felt violated by the film because its pornographic object was created by and for a male gaze. Rather than address her concern, Jacobs seemed to freeze with anger. I then spoke up, suggesting that pornography was not incidental but in fact the ideal object for his Nervous System apparatus, and asked Jacobs how the function of pornography changed when its duration increased so drastically. Could a person jerk off while watching this kind of film? Jacobs blew up and left the room.

After the brief, stunned silence that followed, filmmaker Willie Varela made a generous remark. Himself a veteran of the sixties and seventies male experimental filmmaking scene, Varela observed that what we had here was a generational conflict. He framed this conflict in terms of "art versus content." Responding to film on the basis of ideas about "the gaze," Varela argued, is a product of the generation reared on Laura Mulvey's article "Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema." In this article, first published in 1975 but firmly ensconced in film theory classes by the 1980s, Mulvey argued that narrative film is structured around the gaze of a male viewer. This viewer's fear of castration causes him to identify with male protagonists and fetishize and objectify female bodies as representing castratedness or "lack." Basically, Mulvey argued, Hollywood-style narrative is structured around this male gaze, and thus it should be the mission of feminist filmmakers to disrupt the viewer's pleasure by critiquing the conventions of narrative film. Varela's point was that "It is *learned* to respond on these other levels"—namely those levels informed by feminist theory, psychoanalytic theory, and the whole ball of wax; one should not expect a filmmaker from a different generation to anticipate these responses.

Varela's point was well taken and opened about an hour of animated conversation in our now leaderless group. Nevertheless, the discussion would have been enriched immeasurably if there had been a respect for—and a rudimentary knowledge of—the various "learned" responses throughout the room. It became clear that there were a number of generational splits—between the types of feminist and anti-feminist reactions to pornography, the different attitudes toward popular culture and toward avant-garde film, and the pro- and anti-theory camps. But such antipodes are still too simplistic. Since the time Mulvey's article was published 18 years ago, there has been much work on different ways the gaze may be mobilized. So for anyone to assume that all feminists in the room responded uniformly to *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* in terms of "the gaze" is to conflate a large number of responses. Similarly, some people wanted to split the crowd into nonfeminists and feminists, corresponding to those who enjoyed the film and those who did not. But, as others of us had to point out, there are feminist pro-porn arguments as well. There were feminists who appreciated *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* and nonfeminists who walked out.

The inclusion of a filmmaker like Jacobs at Flaherty was already controversial, because traditionally the six-day seminar centers around documentary film. By now, Flaherty participants are used to imbibing a judicious mix of fictional and experimental approaches with their documentary. But Jacobs' presentation, as it turned out, came at a point when participants were getting to the end of their patience with a section that opened the seminar, which seemed to have nothing to do with documentary. This program, curated by Scott MacDonald, consisted of films based on motion study. These included Godfrey Reggio's *Anima Mundi*, Chris Welsby's time-lapse nature studies, Holly Fisher's *Bullets for Breakfast*, no-budget super 8 films by the prolific Canadian John Porter, and two works by Jacobs that employ his mind-altering Nervous System apparatus.

MacDonald's programming was later criticized for ignoring nonformal issues. "All of the films [in MacDonald's portion of the festival]," complained film/videomaker and critic Jesse Lerner in *Afterimage*, "were made by white filmmakers, and social, political, racial, or gender issues were elided or treated as if they were incidental." However, I found that his choice of works drew attention to the politics of vision. Before the first screening, as we filed into the cushy auditorium at Wells College, animations from *Eadweard Muybridge: Motion Studies* (published 1887) were flashing banally on the screen. These animations are the "fun" part of an educational videodisc by curator/filmmaker Jim Sheldon on Muybridge's work: they take the familiar experiments with serial photography collected in *Animal Locomotion* and make them into short movies, as Muybridge himself did with the zoopraxiscope.

I say they were banal because at first it seemed pointless to reanimate the

Jacobs' Nervous System has many of the same motivations as did Mulvey's writing in 1975: the destruction of pleasure, or at least pleasure based on identification with a narrative; the foregrounding of the technological means of cinema; the disruption of closure.

motions that Muybridge went to such pains to suspend. But they were also rather profound, because these short sequences revealed the nineteenth-century desire to isolate and analyze movement. Partly motivating this will to knowledge was the belief that movement, once analyzed, can be regularized and exploited. Efficiency experts, for example, took advantage of film's capacity to rationalize movement when they analyzed footage of assembly-line workers in order to cut down the number of movements needed for a task.

In addition, the sequences reveal the social codes that informed this most basic of visual experiments, for the innate movements implied by the title *Animal Locomotion* are quite distinct for animals, children, women, and men, as well as for people (and animals) of different classes. For example, the difference between Muybridge's images of gleaming racehorses and the workhorses that trudge from frame to frame is a class difference. More crucially, the "animal locomotions" of women and men are clearly marked in terms of gender difference. Muybridge's men wrestle, hew wood, and do other physically demanding work. While some of his women labor, most do things like pour tea, embrace children, and swing in hammocks. They do not seem to occupy their bodies or master their movements as the men do. In short, it is difficult to look at *Animal Locomotion* nowadays without remarking on the overwhelmingly ideological character of cinematic motion. To begin the seminar with the father of movement analysis in a way that reveals the relation of Muybridge's still-strange studies to modern film conventions was to inscribe politics into the seemingly apolitical genres of avant-garde and structural filmmaking.

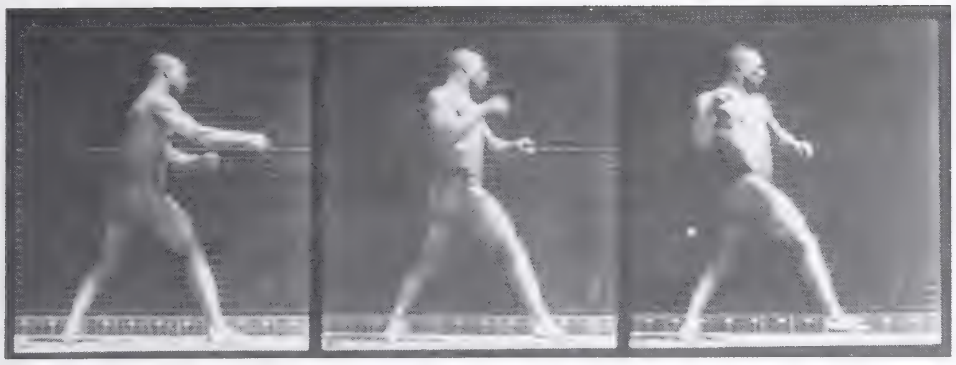
MacDonald's polemical purpose, as he described it to me later, was even more evident in the work following Sheldon's videodisc, Austrian filmmaker Martin Arnold's *Pièce Touchée* 1989. This 15-minute film is constructed from a seconds-long clip from an American fifties melodrama: a seated woman greets a man coming into a room, presumably her husband arriving home. Arnold reprints, switches, and staggers the frames, forcing us to focus upon individual movements even as he denatures them. Visual relations become causal ones. The woman's deferential gaze causes the man to stride toward her; the motion of his arm causes her head to move as though struck. In short, the couple perform a ritual of domestic violence. When I asked MacDonald about his purposes in programming the series, he said that one was explicitly to underscore the relation between gender and film production that motion studies reveal. *Eadweard Muybridge: Motion Studies* and *Pièce Touchée* set up this relation, and Jacobs' performance of *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* summed it up.

Another reason *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* was controversial is that it was a 12-year-old work. Flaherty normally includes many premieres, so people were irritated at being shown old stuff. But the seminar also offers an opportunity to reevaluate work or approach it in new contexts. Showing work there is a way for filmmakers to get a useful variety of feedback. There is a relatively broad spectrum of attitudes among the filmmakers, teachers, programmers, and other film-campers in attendance: we have our fault lines, our generational and ideological splits, our aesthetic and political disagreements, and I'm sure our academic rivalries. Any consensus arrived at in discussion is tentative, and if you stick around for lunch you'll hear the arguments that didn't get broached in the group discussion. A context like this could breathe new relevance into a genre like avant-garde film of the sixties and seventies, which is now wedged into two-week slots in film courses, trotted out for the occasional retrospective, and otherwise historically contained.

My objective, following on Varela's suggestion and my own appreciative response to *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX*, is to explore new ways to think about Jacobs' films and others like them. Filmmakers, students, and critics who came of age in the 1980s often have a knee-jerk aversion to the filmmaking practices of the decades preceding ours. We assume that nothing good can come from the hermetic formal experiments of a buncha white men, a self-selected artistic elite who embodied experimental/avant-garde filmmaking in its formative years. A lot of their premises get on our nerves: the apparent disregard of racial and sexual politics, if not overt racism, sexism, and homophobia; the elitist valorization of capital-A art and its distance from popular culture; the philistine distrust of theory. We claim, by contrast, to represent an enlightened, politically informed film practice. This changing awareness has informed the programming at the Flaherty: in recent years the seminar has shown many more works by women, people of color, queer filmmakers, third-world and indigenous artists, and political activists of other stripes.

But our knee-jerk response to the experimental practices of yesterday can obscure their relationship to some of the more interesting films and videos today. The most compelling of the recent works seen at Flaherty, for example, are those that draw on experimental techniques. Think of Sadie Benning, Trinh T. Minh-ha, Tom Kalin, or Marlon Riggs. Their political messages are compelling partly because they cannot be separated from formal strategies that challenge the pleasure of narrative. As MacDonald said to me, "Avant-garde film still disrupts people's ability to have pleasure. I don't think people deal with avant-garde work any differently now than they did 30 years ago." He contended that the real reason for most of the Flaherty audience's hostile reception to *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* was that they couldn't hack the sheer hard work of watching a two-hour experimental film. "It's typical of audiences seeing avant-garde film for the first time. They want to say they're shocked because it's porn, but they're really pissed at having their vacation interrupted." He argued that works that simply offer the right configurations of pre-digested politics are boring, safe, and ultimately conservative. MacDonald's program insisted that we, as makers and viewers (and critics), need to deal with the very stuff of perception, which is what experimental film does, if we want film to take a political position. "You can't change the world without studying how things work. For me the motion study is a metaphor for one of the steps you need to take in social change." Not only is it a metaphor, but it embodies political relations in microcosm: to generalize Mulvey's argument, power relations are already embodied in the relationship between viewer and viewed, and any film that takes a political position must deal with these relations.

The feminist debate over avant-garde film can be traced back to the late seventies and, in particular, to the formation of the *Camera Obscura* collective. While arguing that feminist filmmaking must engage with avant-garde strategies, the collective found the approach of avant-garde film criticism in books such as P. Adams Sitney's *Visionary Film* and *The Essential Cinema*, which Sitney edited, inadequate because they ignored



Eadweard Muybridge's nineteenth-century motion studies display a social coding of movement and the body.

Photos left and overleaf courtesy Laurence Miller Gallery

political critiques, or else conflated them with formal innovation. Feminist critics of this period looked away from the American avant-garde, which was overwhelmingly male and engrossed with formal concerns, and toward the explicitly political practices of British and U.S. feminist filmmakers. They have never looked back.

One writer who recently attempted to turn a feminist gaze back to the experimental filmmakers of the sixties and seventies is Patricia Mellencamp in *Indiscretions: Avant-Garde Film, Video, and Feminism*. "While the myth of the questing male artist relentlessly circles through avant-garde criticism and certain films, as [Teresa] de Lauretis, I, and countless other critics have argued;" Mellencamp writes, "and while the films do perform work on the formal attributes of the signifier, as [Constance] Penley and [Janet] Bergstrom state; and while avant-garde does enunciate reception as a process, the films themselves, like the theoretical presuppositions, also exist within and engage with the social and the historical." It is this challenge to rehistoricize avant-garde filmmaking that I am taking up here.

KEN JACOBS HAS BEEN MAKING FILMS SINCE 1956, NOT PROLIFICALLY but committedly, since many continue as works-in-progress for years. His better known works include *Star Spangled to Death* (1957), *Blonde Cobra* (1963), *Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son* (1969, revised 1971), *The Sky Socialist* (1964-65/1988), and a number of performances using the Nervous System and other apparati. Studying in the late fifties with Hans Hoffmann, the European art teacher who jumpstarted the Abstract Expressionist painters, Jacobs developed an emphasis on formalism and an ethos of artmaking as a heroic and transcendent practice, and was beatified by Jonas Mekas in *Film Culture* and his *Village Voice* column. Stan Brakhage narrates Jacobs' progress with extraordinary sympathy in his book *Film at Wit's End*, evoking the alienation, poverty, and anarchistic politics that characterized that particular generation of New York artists.

At the Flaherty, MacDonald showed a segment of Jonas Mekas' epic diary *Lost, Lost, Lost* (1976) that neatly summed up Jacobs' location on the avant-garde scene and the historical oil-and-water relationship between the avant-garde and the Flaherty Seminar. In it filmmakers Jack Smith, Mekas, Jacobs, his wife Flo Jacobs, and one or two other incidental women travel to the pristine cloister in Vermont where the Flaherty Seminar is held, intending to stage a guerrilla screening of *Blonde Cobra* and Smith's *Flaming Creatures*. As Mekas narrates their attempt, we see the women sleepily pile out of a VW van; later Smith and Jacobs, robed in blankets in their role as "monks of the order of cinema," swoop through the early morning mist on the Wells College lawn. However, the monks' gatecrashing attempt failed, and the films were not shown at Flaherty until 1992.

Jacobs' works carry out an endless self-critique that P. Adams Sitney calls "an aesthetic of failure." His films stress their own lack of closure, from the ironic failed suicide in *Blonde Cobra* to the unfinished or perpetually reworked status of films like *Star Spangled to Death* to the ephemeral quality of films performed using the Nervous System. This open-endedness is inviting to a contemporary viewer who wants to impose her own readings upon a work; the work seems to cry out for different interpretations.

Many of Jacobs' films are made with found footage. Both *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* and *Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son* use early film reels as their raw material. Other films, such as *Two Wrenching Departures*, rework Jacobs' own footage from years past. Jacobs put together *Blonde Cobra* from footage that Bob Fleischner shot with Jack Smith in 1959 for two planned films, *Blonde Venus* and *The Cobra Woman*. Much of the celluloid had been destroyed in a fire, but Jacobs rescued the remainder and edited it. "Having no idea of the original story plans," Jacobs wrote in the Film-Maker's Cooperative catalogue, "I was able to view the material not as exquisite fragments of a failure, of two failures, but as the makings of a new entirety." Like his "aesthetic of failure," Jacobs' reworking of borrowed footage opens his films to discussion in terms of appropriation, multiple use, and multiple interpretation.

It's also significant that *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* and *Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son* are based on material from popular culture. Jacobs seems to treat the artifacts he works from—whether Fleischner's half-destroyed footage of Smith or vintage porn—as raw material which he transforms into art. According to the modernist thinking of Jacobs' milieu, such a transformation elevates something base, namely pop culture, into something fine, namely art. But at the Flaherty screening, some of us refused the "transmutation" effect of which Jacobs spoke and instead saw the film as an opportunity to explore the original popular-culture artifact.

If we don't respect the hierarchy between the raw material and the final product—and many of us who came up in the eighties have been taught not to—then we end up giving the raw material equal consideration. As a result, a film like *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* is open to alternative viewing, namely as pornography. For viewers to take the film seriously as porn means that we are forced to take a position with regard to porn in general. I examined my reaction to *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* as a reaction to an erotic film. Some of us appreciated the film performance not despite its pornographic raw material but because of it. Thanks to feminist work since the Mulvey watershed, feminist viewers like me have the means to take pleasure in the film, not only in its original form but especially as deconstructed by Jacobs. *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX*, I would argue, allows feminist viewers to have our critique and eat it too.

Whether or not Jacobs was aware of the emerging feminist critiques of the structuring gaze of cinema when he first created *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX*, his project is in fact aligned with such theory. It is also aligned in its opposition to popular culture. Jacobs' Nervous System, after all, has many of the same motivations as did Mulvey's writing in 1975: the destruction of pleasure, or at least pleasure based on identification with a narrative; the foregrounding of the technological means of cinema; the disruption of closure. But unlike feminist critiques, Jacobs relies in an unproblematic way on the voyeuristic pleasures of popular cinema. At the same time he attempts to disavow them, as when during the Flaherty discussion he would only say that "rounded forms" facilitated the 2D-3D play of the Nervous System. Jacobs struggled to distance *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* from porn: "I took something that was abusive of the body and transmuted it and made it glorious," he said. This seemed disingenuous for several reasons. First, one would imagine that he was attracted to this film in particular not because it was hateful but because it was interesting.



Second, it assumes that the final viewing experience had nothing to do with the "raw material": Jacobs claims all the credit for any viewing pleasure we may have. Finally, it assumes that pornography is "abusive of the body." I suspect Jacobs picked this line up from anti-porn feminists in the early eighties who, I've heard, criticized *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* for its perceived sexism. One has to wonder whether he honestly believes porn, or the sort of porn selected here, is abusive.

I believe Jacobs actually did a disservice to the power of his apparatus by denying the pornographic content of the work. Mellencamp, writing about *Tom, Tom, the Piper's Son*, calls belatedly upon theorists of film as an apparatus to let avant-garde film do the theoretical work that they expended analyzing Hollywood cinema. "I would argue that this film, like many avant-garde films, is theory, informed by history—of technique, of style, of story," she writes. I believe the contraption Jacobs designed is an even more perfectly theoretical object than *Tom, Tom*. The Nervous System amplifies and changes the experience of watching film in general, but pornography *in particular*. It amplifies and mocks the desire to know the unknowable that historically informs porn.

At the same time in the 1880s that Muybridge was working on *Animal Locomotion*, Jean-Martin Charcot was recording the convulsions of female hysterics at the Salpêtrière clinic. Both may have been driven by the positivist desire to isolate movement, to see ever more explicitly; but both also bought into and enabled the psychic processes of fetishism. As Linda Williams convincingly argues in *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure, and the Frenzy of the Visible*, the desire to make visible the "secret" of female sexuality drove the fetishism of early cinema: on the one hand, this search for visibility was displaced into the "peekaboo" games of narrative cinema; on the other, it became the compulsion of hardcore porn. While male orgasm can be visibly ascertained, female orgasm cannot. Hence the ever more obsessive desire to somehow make "it" visible that informs pornography. Jacobs' Nervous System pushes this desire to its limit, until the impossibility of the effort becomes apparent. Even when a single frame is stretched, twitching and flickering, for an unbearable length of time, we still can't see it. "This very blindness," writes Williams, "this inability to make the invisible pleasure of the woman manifestly visible and quantifiable, is the hard-core text's most vulnerable point of contradiction and the place where feminists who would resist a monolithic, masculine, hard-core discourse of sexuality can seek the power of resistance." Feminist critics can replace this searching gaze that motivates the porn film, as it motivated Muybridge's experiments, with other sorts of inquiring looks.

It was in the spirit of this sort of resistance that I watched Jacobs' performance of *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX*. He chose a rich film text to work from—and if the discussion had been open to other things besides transcending the raw material, it would have been exciting to find out how he decided to use this charming artifact. The anonymous, probably French film *Cherries* has a simple narrative involving two women picking fruit. A man spies on them as they pull up their sheer skirts to better hold their cache. He approaches them aggressively; they at first resist his advances and then give in. The rest of this short film is a loose montage showing the ménage à trois in various sexual positions.

Despite the rape connotations of the opening sequence (which, mind you, lasted 40 minutes in the Nervous System version), the actual sex scenes in the film are remarkable for their attention to the varieties of female as well as male sexual pleasure. The women have sex with the man in a variety of positions, and the camera focuses on their enjoyment; he gives cunnilingus to at least one of them, and they kiss and fondle each other. Of course these are all conventions of heterosexual male porn—the shots demonstrating the woman's pleasure, the "lesbian" foreplay. However, films such as *Cherries* suggest that early pornographic film, even though it was intended for straight male viewers, was more open to multiple readings than the porn genres that followed. These are films made before porn's imagery was coded and its audiences divided up. Such early porn is full of transitional moments when sexual meanings seem to slip: when, for example, a glance between two same-sex supporting characters undermines the manifestly heterosexual content of the scene; or a woman's seemingly casual gesture becomes purposefully auto-erotic; or a character stares full into the camera for a frame, revealing the fact that this is a performance. By isolating such moments, Jacobs' apparatus actually exploits this polysemic character of early porn. A 1990s viewer can reclaim the various identifications entertained by these early films, which shift from one woman to the other to the man, from giver to receiver of pleasure to voyeur (for often the third person was only rudimentarily involved), and from participant in the scene (in the long and medium shots) to fetishistic viewer (in the explicit close-ups).

The Nervous System performance did transform this film. It made single shots not only interminable but rich in infinitesimal variation, intensifying the viewing experience until it was almost unbearable. When a woman takes endless minutes to roll the hem of her chemise an inch further up her leg, that one tiny motion becomes a universe of seen or imagined movements. When, in the final brief shot, one of the women is on top of the man, seen from behind as the shaft of his penis slides into her vagina, it lasts forever: we stare until there is nothing more to see, exhausting our arousal; we get bored, we start to hallucinate faces in the trees.

The apparatus radically altered—but did not annul—the function of pornography. A viewer's relation to the porn film has to change when the erotic scenario is stretched from five minutes to two hours. In order to stay turned on, you need what you are watching to have a certain amount of continuity. It becomes debatable whether one can "get off" to this film, because the filmmaker's structural intervention all but destroys the minimal narrative connections from scene to scene and even from shot to shot. For me the Nervous System's transformations raised the questions, At what point in the film do you get aroused? How long can you keep it up? What do you do after you've gotten off once?

Jacobs was appalled at the suggestion that his film could function as pornography (he called the idea "disgusting, disgusting!"). But his own statements about the transformative process wrought by the Nervous System—that it creates a "continuous rolling effect where things don't go anywhere"—propose a strikingly different relation of the viewer to pornography. The standard orgasmic relation to porn, while it has its virtues, creates closure insofar as it facilitates catharsis. By contrast, the Nervous System presentation of *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* creates a situation in which, rather than getting off, the viewer is constantly tumescent. I would argue that this is a highly creative state—open-ended, vulnerable, and aware, if a little exhausting. (Am I arguing for a Brechtian pornography? Maybe eventually; not in this essay.) Incidentally, in my extremely informal

In my extremely informal survey after the screening, a number of women said they were turned on by XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX, but no men did.



Curator Scott MacDonald's program on motion study, which included Martin Arnold's *Pièce Touchée* (1989), helped put *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* in context.

Courtesy Canyon Cinema

survey after the screening, a number of women said they were turned on by the performance, but no men did.

Our aesthetic, intellectual, and I think sexual pleasure in *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* was based on its ability to interact with our individual fantasmatics. The film took a popular-cultural artifact and blew it so far apart that there was room for our desires to play out in the gaps. It exploited our individual propensities to create images in the abstract play of the flickering frames. If one was willing to look at all, Jacobs' apparatus made pornography more conducive to individual fantasy and actually militated against the notion that pornography forces the viewer to react in predictable ways. It could be used also to show how people other than those originally intended for a work of pornography—such as women—can view the work appropriatively or in alternative ways.

Amazingly, *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* posited an alternative to the notion of the dominating male gaze. Instead it gave us a gaze that can be seduced, get lost in the image, and switch identifications willy-nilly. As Richard Herskowitz put it in the discussion, "The film looks at me, too"; the film makes us self-conscious about our own look. The *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* experience supports the argument that film theorist Kaja Silverman has made that, while the dominating gaze may be phallic, it is not male. Voyeurism, far from being a dominant viewing position, is the situation in which one is *least* in control: "It is precisely at the moment when the eye is placed to the keyhole that it is most likely to find itself subordinated to the gaze," Silverman writes. She distinguishes between the gaze and the look: the gaze exists independently of any viewer, outside us and outlasting us, while the look pertains to the individual eye. When anyone tries to look in a desiring way, Silverman argues, she or he is just borrowing the phallic gaze. This tentative borrowing is what we were all doing, women and men, as we tried to come up with desiring positions in relation to *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX*.

The phenomenological language that people were using to talk about film at the time that Jacobs conceived of the Nervous System has been, if not completely displaced, expanded. Now it takes into account the cultural, social, and psychic situatedness of the viewer. The kinds of comments Flaherty participants came up with synthetically spanned a historical range of ways of talking about experimental film, besides the varieties of feminist approaches discussed here (antiporn, anticensorship, psychoanalytic, Foucaultian).

Some, for instance, assented to the sixties liberationist argument that to show eroticism is inherently progressive. Filmmaker Holly Fisher simply appreciated *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* as "a sexy, pleasurable film" and suggested that feminists who were offended by it had an ideology that prevented them from enjoying it.

Fisher's comment begs the question, If an ideology interferes with one form of pleasure, what alternate pleasure does it afford that makes us willing to relinquish the first? Theoretical devices increase and differentiate the pleasure of the viewing experience. "Ideology" can help you enjoy a film *more*. It is a different sort of pleasure, of course, more self-reflexive, more responsive to context.

Those of us with ideologies different from those of Jacobs and his peers are a new audience for sixties experimental film. We have processed agendas for filmmaking and viewing that include the phenomenological, early feminist, popular-cultural, new feminist, and antiracist. We bring a rich, if different, approach to films made with the agendas of 20 years ago. We have given ourselves permission, as therapists say, to make what use we will of the traditions of avant-garde cinema. And if the readings we produce enable new thought rather than close down meanings, then I believe they are acting in the spirit of open-endedness that Jacobs and so many other avant-garde filmmakers upheld and still uphold.

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IT'S A SMALL WORLD MARKET AFTER ALL II

International Documentary Coproduction

ROBERT L. SEIGEL

Given the ever-shrinking financial avenues in the United States and the ever-expanding global market, independent documentary film- and videomakers are increasingly forming alliances with foreign partners. [See "It's a Small World Market After All: US-Foreign Cofinancing Ventures," August/September 1992, for the distinction between coproductions and co-ventures in the narrative fiction area, plus information on coproduction contracts, foreign subsidies, and related issues.]



From *Earth Tech '92*, which grew out of the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, where WNET and several foreign partners decided to join forces.

Photo: Sandy Rangila, courtesy WNET

However, these co-ventures should not be viewed as a way of getting money in the pocket with no strings attached, as naive filmmakers sometimes imagine. There are benefits, drawbacks, and compromises that must be weighed. Such issues were addressed by a panel of international producers, broadcasters, and distributors at the November 11 seminar "What's Up Docs: The State of the Documentary Coproduction," sponsored by New York Women in Film. The panel discussion, which focused on co-ventures with television programming services and broadcasters, was coproduced and moderated by Katrina Wood, president of Media Exchange, an organization that coordinates tours of overseas markets for U.S. and foreign producers seeking to enhance their coproduction prospects.

Frances Berrigan, managing director of Cicada Films and Walberry Productions in the United Kingdom, reminded producers of the necessary legwork. Independent documentarians must first do the research to find out whether a broadcaster generally works with freelance producers or solely in conjunction with more established independent production companies (as is the case with the U.K.'s Channel 4). In addition, the film/videomaker should determine the primary market for a project—in particular, whether that will be the U.S. or a foreign territory. If it's the U.S. and the producer has been able to secure some U.S. funding or interest, then he or she could approach a foreign company for finishing funds either through an equity position or a territorial pre-sale. It can also work the other way around. This method is better than approaching different markets haphazardly for funding. Regardless of what market may be targeted, Berrigan suggested that U.S. independents form an alliance with independent producers in the foreign market whose background is compatible (e.g., nature, science, history, investigative reporting). The foreign partner will often have access to commissioning editors at regional television stations.

William Einreinhofer, executive producer of scientific programming at WNET-TV New York, attempted to dispel the common notion of international co-ventures and coproduction as "you give us the money and you'll get a credit," explaining that many foreign partners lack sufficient funding themselves. As Einreinhofer observed, foreign partners can offer things other than funding—such as experience, equipment, facilities, and production personnel. He cited WNET's experience with Japanese station NHK. WNET produced footage that NHK needed, while the Japanese company provided crew and facilities for a WNET project. "No money changed hands," Einreinhofer noted, "but both parties got material for their separate projects, even though this wasn't a true coproduction."

Einreinhofer also pointed out with this case a common occurrence: different countries may want different versions of the same project. Such parties as NHK, Singapore TV, and Chinese television often have specific requirements, he noted. In all cases, a U.S. partner should make him- or herself aware of the overseas partner's programming mandate and the likelihood of a re-edit.

Many foreign documentary coproductions are between broadcasters. But some companies, such as the Discovery Channel and its sister cable service, the Learning Channel, work with both broadcasters (e.g., BBC and Germany's ZDF) and

Foreign partners can offer things other than funding—such as experience, equipment, facilities, and production personnel.

independent foreign producers, observed Tom Grams, Discovery's senior manager for acquisitions and development. When pitching a project, Grams explained that a television coproduction partner will want to know a project's central idea or theme, whether any funding or funding commitments are in place, and the producer's background. Such information should be conveyed through a proposal that is concise and clear to potential production partners who may not be fluent in the nuances of the English language. This should be accompanied by a pilot or sample reel and a realistic budget, which indicates what percentage of the budget is covered by coproducing or funding partners.

The panelists then illustrated their suggestions with video presentations. John Gau, managing director of John Gau Productions, screened excerpts from his series on the history of aviation, *Reach for the Skies*, a co-venture of CBS International, Turner Broadcasting, and the BBC. Gau explained how, as producer, he served as a "midwife" to elicit interest and subsequent commitments from CBS International and the BBC. Gau noted that the program was edited by the partners to fit their specific markets. The U.S. version, shown by Turner, did not contain certain references and segments concerning air vehicles that were created and used outside the U.S.

Einreinhofer presented excerpts from *Earth Tech '92*, a global environment special produced in conjunction with the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro last year. As he explained, a group of foreign production partners came together with WNET. They decided that each partner would produce a program for its respective market, but parts of any program could be incorporated in a partner's program for its market. "We stressed common themes—'success stories' regarding the environment—but we celebrated rather than hid the fact that different segments had different styles and came from different countries," Einreinhofer acknowledged. Again, the version seen on U.S. public television was edited specifically for a U.S. audience.

Nancy Walzog, vice president of the distribution company Tapestry International, presented an excerpt from a pilot for a proposed series on social and scientific global issues, *Spaceship Earth*. The pilot was a blend of international archival footage and filmed interviews that were produced with limited funding using in-kind services at facilities around the world. In Walzog's view, the program could have been developed more effectively if the producer had worked initially with production partners on creating a series of episodes rather than focusing on a pilot episode. "Think series," Walzog suggested, "Broadcasters know what to do with a series of factual programs sometimes better than a 'one-off' project."

Gau concurred, adding that all coproduction partners should evaluate whether a project is worth the participation of several partners. Citing the programs *Voyager* and *The World of National Geographic* shown on Britain's ITV, which used different producers under an umbrella series concept, Gau explained that some production partners are more amenable to producing a series than to individual or "one-off" projects since "the stakes are sufficient for all parties to get involved and get something out of it."

Berrigan told how one of her first projects was an Anglo-Soviet wildlife co-venture in which the Soviet partner provided access to equipment, crew, and facilities, while the British producer provided film stock, wildlife photographers, and post-production services. "Global issues such as wildlife and the environment are good for coproductions," she noted.

However, "personal stories" can also be the basis for documentary coproductions, especially if one partner has access to materials the other cannot acquire. A case in point is *Philby*, another Anglo-Soviet venture, in which Berrigan was given access to film footage concerning the notorious Soviet spy. Similarly she obtained Russian footage for *The Krogs*, an Anglo-Soviet program on an American husband and wife who fled America during the 1950s for the UK, where they helped form a Soviet espionage network. "We presold the Soviet footage to a British broadcaster. This provided the funds for the Soviets to get equipment and for the British producer to research and re-edit the footage," Berrigan noted. "Without our Soviet partner, we would never have had access to these interviews and footage."

In closing, Walzog advised U.S. independents to get a U.S. partner "such as Discovery on board first and then build on that equity" in forming a foreign co-venture. Several panelists reiterated the need for documentarians to consider a foreign coproduction partner as more than a possible source of financing, and to be sensitive to the language and cultural nuances of the partner and his or her country.

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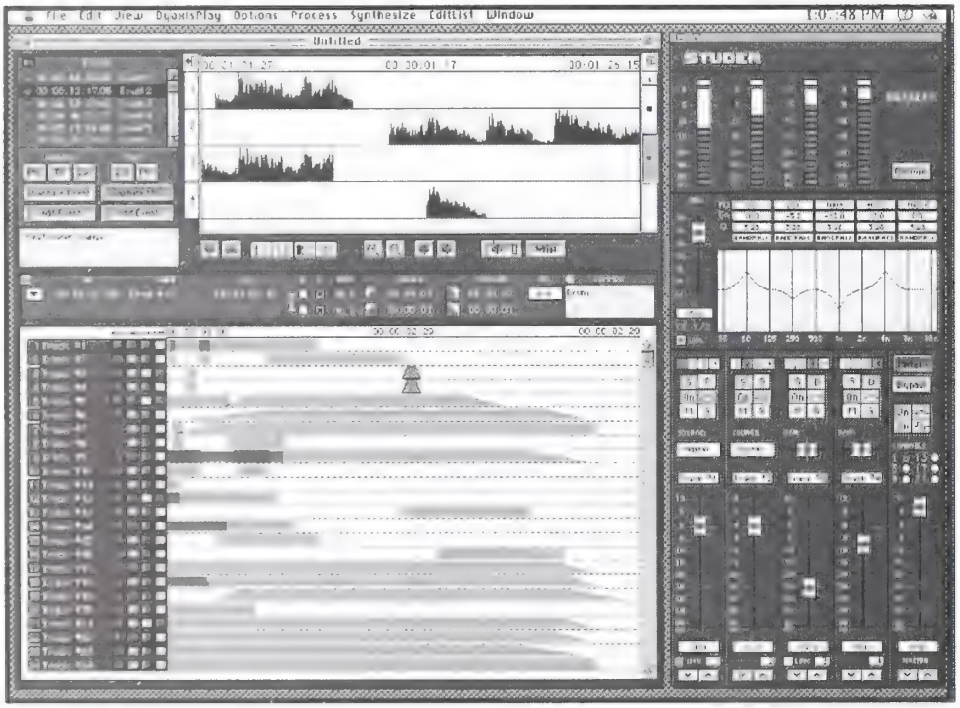
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The main screen from the Studer Dyaxis digital audio workstation.

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This article will outline the many ways that digital workstations reduce the amount of time necessary to accomplish most film/video sound editing tasks. But while digital's efficiency does not always translate into dollars saved, it does translate into quality gained per dollar spent.

A digital audio workstation is a computer. Just as a word processor stores and edits words, a digital audio workstation records, stores, and manipulates sounds. It can store any type of sound—a gun shot, an hour-long symphony, or a human voice. Converted to digital form, these once hard-to-handle electronic or acoustic soundwaves are reduced to a much simpler form: zeros and ones, the language of the computer. These are stored in a variety of ways: on a hard drive, CD-ROM, or on the new writeable optical disks.

There are three obvious advantages to this technology: digital sound quality, immediate access to sounds, and precise and creative manipulation of these sounds. In other words, digital audio presents the opportunity for greatly increased efficiency and heightened creativity.

Integrated digital audio workstations combine many important audio technologies in one environment. They incorporate high-fidelity digital hard-disk recording, powerful sound editing tools, digital signal processing, high-resolution digital mixing, and much more. Film/videomakers can apply this technology to any aspect of audio postproduction, including scoring, dialogue, and sound effects editing.

"If we talk about the advantages of random-access audio to tape-based audio," says Digidesign engineer Steve Bourne, "random access means that I can grab any sound at any time. It's the difference between having a CD player where you can 'drop the needle' at any point or having a cassette player where, if you want to hear the fifth song, you have to let the tape spin past the first four. With a random-access system, if you want to listen to 15 different gunshots for a particular scene, you don't have to rewind or fast forward all over the tape; you just pull up each sound and click on a button."

"I haven't used tape in over two years," explains sound designer/editor Rich McCar. "My clients enjoy the luxury of lightening-fast editing. I can loop a dialogue, try the first half of this take and the second half of that take, all non-destructively within a few seconds."

On an hourly basis, digital sound editing costs 15 to 20 percent more than traditional magnetic tape editing. Hourly rates for both vary depending on geography, facilities, and the sound editor. Most digital studios offer bulk hourly packages, which significantly reduce the per-hour expense and bring costs more in line with conventional moviola editing.

"Some people think that if you use digital, the job will take only two hours instead of four," warns McCar. "What it does mean is that instead of spending four hours and settling for something, you're going to spend four hours to get what you want. And you will get what you want."

Many sound editors are still using tape and getting high-quality results the old fashioned way. But the traditional ways of working are not nearly as cost-effective. Given the cost-effectiveness of digitial workstations, why are the "old" technologies and techniques still so pervasive? "The film environment has been the most resistant to digital for a number of reasons," explains McCar. "I think that many years ago the film industry conquered sync problems in a very simple way, with the beep and with 60Hz resolution. For years film people have had solutions, like the Nagra. So there wasn't a need to try to correct something that worked well."

Sound effects have traditionally been recorded on magnetic tape. Multiple tracks of tape allows the sound editor to layer and mix a few sound effect components together to create the desired effect. This process is time-consuming and cumbersome, however, when compared to working within the digital domain.

"With mag tape," says McCar, "a sound editor has to physically take the sound effect and put it on a reel. They have big laundry baskets that hold these sound effects and they have a lot of filler in order to keep sync—because everything is based on the beep. When they want to cut in a sound

effect, they have to cut out that much filler, cut in the sound effect, line it up, and match it to picture. It's amazing how many people still do it this way."

"I don't have to worry about filler," continues McCar. "I just have to deal with the sound effects. When I want to move something two frames this way or a quarter frame that way to see if it feels better, I just hit one button and it's done. Traditional sound editors have to slice and re-slice it. They are cutting all the time. When I move my segments on the screen it doesn't affect my edits later."

"I can never imagine going back," adds James Klotz, sound editor at Synchronized Sound and a proud Studer Dyaxis user. "I am doing all the sweetening for the NBA on TNT spots, a big client of mine. What these guys require is three or four different versions of a 30-second spot. One is for Thursday night, one for Saturday afternoon, etc. These spots are very sound-intensive—slam dunks, crowd cheers. They'll put in explosions when the player makes a basket. They like to make it really fun. It takes a while to build the first spot, but a workstation allows me to copy the entire first spot to another file, do an offset, copy it to another time code, then fly in another tag and another voice-over, and I have a new version of the first spot. Essentially, I build all the other spots like that. With digital, you still have independent mix control over all the spots. Doing it without a workstation, I would have to build each spot from scratch."

"Digital is faster, no question, and there is no erosion of the sound," states Etiene Sauret, director/producer of *Lazy Man's Zen*. "In film the problem is you have to deal with mag tracks that get eroded and destroyed very quickly. The beauty of digital is that there is no erosion whatsoever."

Sauret goes on to warn against the hazards of using SMPTE time code to lock up multiple tape transports. "With mag tape, you're locked right in. But when you're trying to lock up multiple tape machines, you can become a slave to very slippery time codes. We got around this problem on *Lazy Man's Zen* by downloading every track off the D1 directly onto the computer. The beauty of doing it this way is that we never went to tape. We did it from digital hard drive to digital hard drive. We avoided all the problems with the speed of different tape transports. A lot of people will tell you one or two frames of slippage doesn't matter, when in fact it is critical."

Many sound editors get frustrated when they get to the mixing stage. They would like to do some pre-mixing of the more fundamental components of the soundtrack. By pre-mixing and combining layers of sound effects, the mixer is allowed to concentrate on the more global decisions, such as mixing the pre-layered sound effects with music and dialogue tracks.

"In my Spectral digital multitrack," says McCar, "the strength is that I have 256 virtual tracks, which means I can have visual representations of the whole film. I can play 16 tracks back at one time and do a pre-mix internally. I can pre-mix 16

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tracks of very complex car chases, dialogue, sound effects, and music all at one time—pre-mixes that are director approved. Then, at the final mix, I can adjust the mix even further. In essence, it allows me to have more dubbers at one time."

The process of composing for film or video is equal parts inspiration and arithmetic. Before a composer can record a note, he or she has to figure out the timing for each scene. There will be a "hit point" where the music will accoustically mark a moment in the film's action. These hit points rarely fall with any metric consistency and, if they are to make any sense, the composer must determine the proper meters and tempos to make the score function properly.

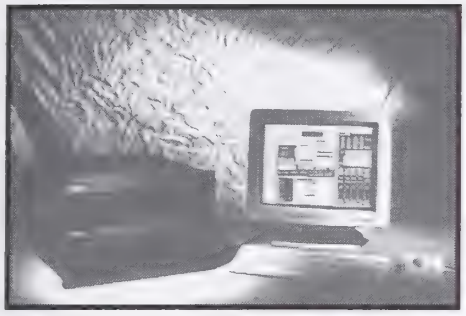
Computers excel at the repetitious calculations necessary to figure out the timing of musical scores. They can easily follow synchronization signals from film or videotape to produce perfect timing clicks. Less busywork equals more time to be creative.

Perhaps the most significant advantage of digital is that it allows the film/videomaker to get directly involved in the creative aspects of building a soundtrack. More involvement by the film/videomaker assures two things: the integration of the soundtrack into the total artistic vision and a streamlining of the process.

"If a producer and director disagree on a certain effect or music track," says McCar, "in seconds I can show them both versions back-to-back, and they can come to a decision. This strategy allows the creative process to really move. It keeps it on a positive note."

"Clients are saving money and getting more involved," says sound designer Scott Gershen, who recently worked as sound editor on *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles III*. "There is a scene in which a scepter glows as the turtles get transmitted back in time," he recalls. "We used the Waveframe [digital workstation] to create sound effects that make the whole theater feel like it is rotating. To see if the client would buy something that radical, we brought him into the editorial room, played it for him, and asked him what he thought. Our editing rooms are set up with left-, right-, center-surround. What we try to do is create mini dubbing theaters to give the client what he or she is going to get at the dubbing stage. Because of the large expense of dubbing time, we try to get the client more involved with the process. The client can make a lot of the crucial decisions in the editorial process and not at the dubbing stage."

The average film/video project requires a digital system with at least four hours of mono digital sound memory, eight channels of simultaneous sound recording and playback, onboard sampling, digital sound-processing, and sound memory backup. Make sure the system you choose to buy or rent meets these minimum specifications. A system with this configuration can be bought for as little as $15,000 for a Spectral digital multitrack, $22,000 for Digidesign's Pro-tools, $33,000 for a Waveframe, and $45,000 for a Studer Dyaxis. Although all these systems can meet a video/



At $45,000, the Studer Dyaxis II Multichannel Digital Audio Production System is the top end of the digital systems.

filmmaker's fundamental sound editing requirements, there are significant differences in how each handles a solution to a particular task.

Find the system whose software feels the most organic, sensible, and comfortable to your way of thinking. Make sure the sound editor is experienced with the system and with film/videomakers. Find a sound editor who understands your needs and can efficiently implement them. A seasoned sound editor with extensive experience on a digital system is the greatest factor in achieving quality and productivity.

The purchase price of a particular workstation does not translate directly into the hourly cost of a studio. Hourly rates for a sound editor and studio range from $100 to $200. It is possible to find a room with a Studer Dyaxis that costs the same as a room with a Spectral digital multitrack. In choosing a facility, one must weigh a broad range of factors including: technical support, room acoustics, aesthetics, and of course the abilities of the sound editor assigned. There are situations where the studio might cost twice as much, but the editor is three times as fast.

In the final analysis, the goal of every film/videomaker is to accurately translate his or her aesthetic vision into an artistic reality using the talent and tools available. Digital workstations can boost the sound quality on films of all different budgets. "In the past," says Gershen, "it took a lot of time to get a really superior job done. What the workstation enables me to do is to spend more time being creative and less time just doing the busy work. The user, the editor, and the client get better quality in the same amount of time. It takes less time to research and implement, leaving more time to be creative. Digital technology means lower-budget projects can get a better sound job."

Bill Bloom is a New York City-based music producer, composer, sound engineer, and owner of Willie H. Productions.

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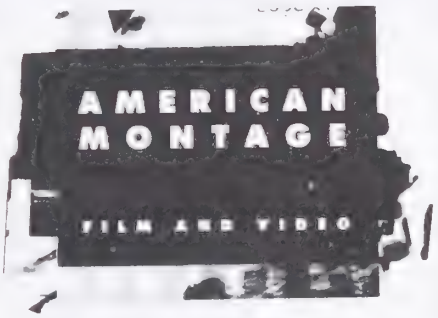
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SUFFRAGETTE CITY

Christina Springer and Casi Pacillio Create Their Own Destiny

YVONNE WELBON

"In the 1850s people were doing things that make Malcolm X look like a moderate," says Christina Springer, director/writer of *Creation of Destiny*, a three-part feature film-in-progress. The first part, *The First Journey*, shows Underground Railroad workers putting their lives on the line. "It took a lot of courage to help runaway slaves, people that you didn't know, because you believed [slavery] was wrong," adds the film's producer, Casi Pacillio.

Creation of Destiny, which will comprise three 57-minute features, takes place in four time periods: 1859, 1991, 2060, and 3040. These eras are linked by the unusual ability of the main character, Ashe Clemens (Barbara O, from *Daughters of the Dust*), to walk through time and guide her descendants in creating a better world. *The First Journey*, now in postproduction, begins in the Antebellum period and depicts the free, educated, middle-class segment of the African American population, centering on an intense female friendship between a free middle-class black woman who runs a boarding house and a white suffragette. The story will find its parallel in subsequent sections of the epic film when Clemens travels through time to 1991, where her descendent Coretta Sampson (Karen Williams) is romantically involved with a white woman. Clemens offers moral guidance to the couple's eight-year-old daughter.

What makes *Creation of Destiny* unique has as much to do with the multiracial, multigenerational crew as it does with the film's theme. "We began looking for crew members who were black women, then lesbians, then white women, and then black and white men who could handle that environment," says Springer, who is making her directorial debut with this film. "I felt that if we could be gay/straight, male/female, black/white, and cooperate in creating this vision on the set for two weeks, it could also happen elsewhere."

Pacillio, formerly an adjunct professor of film at Antioch College, concurs: "We are talking about breaking down the barriers of homophobia, racism, and ageism. We have an eight-year-old and a 78-year-old in the film." Springer adds, "We also have two 13-year-old black girls doing everything from running traffic to getting the food out." The project also attracted a number of experienced African American filmmakers who are living in the Midwest. The director of photography, Michelle Crenshaw, is a Chicago-based filmmaker who has served as camera assistant on films ranging from *Home Alone* to *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* Zeinabu irene Davis, an associate film





Director Christina Springer (left) listens as Clemens (Barbara O) guides her eight-year-old descendent.

Photo: Louise Fish, courtsey filmmaker

professor at Northwestern University and director of *A Powerful Thang* and *Cycles*, came on board as sound recordist. Ohioan Dorothy Thigpen, who served as assistant camera and sound on the independent documentary *River of Courage*, joined the crew as assistant camera.

"Narrative film has always served as a neutral, safe mechanism to examine our culture, ethics, and beliefs," says Springer. "Our primary objective is to make a film that asks the viewer to question established concepts regarding both our history and culture."

The story is set in southern Ohio, where many remnants of the Underground Railroad still exist. *The First Journey* was shot outside Dayton at the Carriage Hill Reserve, a living history farm. Springer enlisted the farm's historian as a consultant for the art department and engaged the resident blacksmith to tutor the lead actor in the craft of smithing.

The characters in *The First Journey* are a compilation of historical personages. The main character, Ashe Clemens, is based loosely on a member of the Hunster family who owned and operated a boarding house in Yellow Springs. As Springer describes her, "Ashe Clemens receives her spunk from Maria W. Stewert," a black lecturer who used Biblical examples to support the right of women to speak publicly; "her skills as an entrepreneur from Ellenor Eldridge," a Jill-of-all-trades who worked to establish a small business and acquired property; "and her passion for social justice from Sojourner Truth," an orator who spoke against slavery and for women's rights.

Clemens uses her establishment as a station on the Underground Railroad. Her fiancé, Daniel Sampson (John Jelks, from *A Powerful Thang*), is a railroad conductor. Sampson's character is based on Wheeling Gaunt, the developer of Pacillio and Springer's Yellow Springs home, which dates from 1851. Gaunt, a former slave who purchased himself and settled in Yellow Springs in 1848, began dabbling in real estate and was thought to be the richest black man in Ohio of his time. Similarly, Sampson is a former slave who purchased himself from his master by hiring himself out as a blacksmith.

Ashe Clemens (Barbara O) discovers a kitchen helper (Latifah Warfield) taking a break in *Creation of Destiny: The First Journey* by Casi Pacillio and Christina Springer.

Photo: Louise Fish, courtesy filmmakers

The Underground Railroad operation in the film is threatened after a white tenant, Constance Haviland-Cley (Anita Stenger), moves into the boarding house. This character is based loosely on Rebecca Pennell, the first female college professor in the United States. Haviland-Cley is a young woman influenced by women's rights and antislavery activists like Lucretia Mott, who is remembered for inviting blacks to tea and dinner at her home.

Springer took four years to research and write the script for *Creation of Destiny*. Her source material range from scholarly works to African captive narratives found at the Wilberforce Archives, the Ohio Historical Society, and the Antiochiana Archives of Antioch College. "In my studies I learned that we haven't moved forward as much as we want to believe we have," Springer muses.

One thing that has changed, she notes, is "the dynamics of women's friendships...since the Industrial Revolution and with the consumer age. The intensity of 19th century women's friendships almost look lesbian in this day and time. It amazes me that women could bond so intensely and have their own tight communities that could cross race lines, depending on the class situations."

The film depicts such a relationship between Clemens and Haviland-Cley. "Constance is a bloomer wearer," explains Springer, "which basically means she walked around in her underwear. She was a Madonna of the 1850s. That was radical. But she had the privilege to be that radical." Springer continues, "I contrast Constance with Ashe Clemens, who is very traditional in dress; she wears hoop skirts. But on the inside Ashe behaves very radically by running slaves through the Underground Railroad, owning property, and managing a business."

Pacillio and Springer's belief that people can choose to create a better world is reflected not only in their narrative and crew; it is also a major part of their fundraising strategy. The message to potential investors is a simple one: buying a ticket to a finished film is not enough. "If we want to see films that are accurate and positive representations of ourselves," says Springer, "it is up to our communities to create, control, and fund these products that are for us, by us, and about us. We need to be responsible for ourselves."

The producers have raised over $80,000 from community contributions and grants from the Ohio Arts Council, the NEA Regional Fellowship program, and Fuji Film. "Funding is the real reason we broke it up into three parts," says Springer. "We had enough money to shoot one-third of the film, and the historical section was the one most people were interested in. It was also the least controversial. The other sections focus on a lesbian family, older people, and some pretty radical ideas." In the future sections, Pacillio notes, "America is returned to the native peoples, and we focus on things like taking care of our water and our environment."

In light of recent government funding controversies over gay and lesbian art, Springer chose to take the word "lesbian" out of her grant applications and has created "straight" and "gay" trailers for different funding targets. It is a reality she and Pacillio hope will soon change.

"We need to see more positive, realistic images," says Pacillio. "As part of an interracial lesbian couple with a child, Christina and I feel a lot of responsibility as parents. Now our daughter, Imani, will be able to turn on the television and see a very light-skinned black girl like herself with a black mama and a white mama."

Yvonne Welbon is a filmmaker and writer who lives in Chicago.

IN & OUT OF PRODUCTION

ELLEN LEVY

The year was 1935. Unemployed men hopped freight cars determined to take their demands across Canada to the nation's capital at Ottawa. Stopped violently in Saskatchewan by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, they nevertheless live on in spirit. **On to Ottawa** (53 min.), by Canadian video artist Sara Diamond, interweaves scripted voiceover with historical footage to create a multilayered look at the Dirty Thirties. Women and work from the 1930s to 1950s are the subject of Diamond's four-part series **The Lull Before the Storm**, which combines docudrama and experimental documentary to chronicle women's experience. *On to Ottawa* and *The Lull Before the Storm*, Women's Labour History, Attn: Sara Diamond, General Delivery, Banff, Alberta, TOL OCO Canada; (403) 762-6696.

Since 1986, guerilla-art hero Robbie Conal's mass-produced posters of public figures have been plastered on city walls coast-to-coast, treading the fine line between pop art and publicity stunt. Clay Walker's **Post No Bills** (56 min., 16mm, b&w) focuses on the reaction to Conal's poster, distributed after the Rodney King beating. *Post No Bills*, Box 34321, Los Angeles, CA 90034 or contact ITVS at (612) 225-9035.

Videomaker Barry Strongin discovered 97-year-old A.J. Snow in the men's room at a rest stop en route to a Canadian ski lodge. Snow was demonstrating to two little boys how his dentures worked. **Gray Rocks** is an intimate portrait of the Great Neck, New York, resident and his 70-year-old spouse, Aida Snow. *Gray Rocks*, Barry Strongin, c/o Wilkinson/Lipsman, 8170 Beverly Blvd, Suite 205, Los Angeles, CA 90048-4513; (213) 651-0937.

The Jews of Cochin, India, trace their history to the reign of King Solomon (1000 B.C.), when Jewish trader ships set forth every three years from Judea to the Malabar coast of southwest India to establish outposts and thriving settlements. Johanna Spector's **Two Thousand Years of Freedom and Honor: The Cochin Jews of India** (80 min., 16mm) documents the rich tapestry of life in this fading Jewish community. *Two Thousand Years of Freedom and Honor*, Spector Films, 400 West 119 St, New York, NY 10027; (212) 666-9461.

Thousands, not hundreds, of Panamanians died in the 1989 U.S. invasion of Panama. Many were executed; almost all the bodies were disposed of in violation of the Geneva Conventions. Five mass grave sites have already been uncovered, and there are more. **The Panama Deception** (91 min., video/35mm transfer), produced by the Empowerment Project, provides a provocative look at the invasion, its aftermath, and the coverup. *The Panama Deception*, 1653 18th St, Suite #3, Santa Monica, CA 90404; (310) 828-8807; fax: (310) 453-4347.



Bob Giges' oral history documentary *My Yiddishe Momme McCoy* celebrates his grandmother's 50-year interfaith romance.

Courtesy filmmaker

First contacted in the late 1970s, the Waiapi Indians of Brazil are fighting off the encroachments of the outside world. A highway threatens to divide their lands in two and the Brazilian government proposes to reduce their traditional lands. Geoffrey O'Connor's half-hour documentary **At the Edge of Conquest: The Journey of Chief Wai-Wai** tracks the leader's confrontation with Brazil's massive political bureaucracy as he fights to save his society. *At the Edge of Conquest*, Realis Pictures, 32 Union Square East, Suite 816, New York, NY 10003; (212) 505-1911; fax: (212) 505-1179.

Exploring the changing relationship between gay men's erotic lives, identity, and the politics of sexuality, **A Geography of Desire**, by Robert Rosenberg, explores the sexual lives of gay men from the 1970s to the present. The film maps New York's gay sexual spaces from the Christopher Street piers to the Central Park Ramble. *A Geography of Desire*, Magnus Movies, 663 DeGraw St, #3, Brooklyn, NY 11217; (718) 783-8432.

Bill Simonett's **Fare Game** (58 min., 16mm) takes viewers inside the thriving rural industry of game farms and shooting preserves, where entrepreneurial farmers are creating a new industry by raising live game birds that hunters pay to kill. *Fare Game* raises provocative questions about the desire for tradition in a world of diminishing resources. *Fare Game*, Carousel Films, 218 Oak Grove St, Suite 303, Minneapolis, MN 55403; (612) 871-6084; fax: (612) 933-8114.

The camera is a character in its own right in Walter Ungerer's experimental film **Leaving the Harbor**. People on screen talk to the camera; characters walk in and out of the frame; the crew prompts from off screen, while the camera may or may not follow the action. *Leaving the Harbor*, Dark Horse Films, Box 982, Montpelier, VT 05602; (802) 223-3967.

When an Orthodox Jew from Vienna arrived on Ellis Island at the turn of the century, who knew she would fall in love with an Irish-Catholic? Bob Giges' oral history documentary **My Yiddishe Momme McCoy** celebrates the half-century interfaith romance between 90-year-old Belle Demner and Bernie McCoy as it sheds light on the immigrant experience at the beginning of the twentieth century. Giges' **Bach Lives!...At David Cope's House** explores composer Cope's use of a computer technology to compose music strikingly similar to that of Mozart, Bach, and Joplin. The 25-minute video takes a critical look at this compositional technology from the perspective of musicians, concertgoers, computer scientists, and educators. *My Yiddishe Momme McCoy* and *Bach Lives!*, Giges Productions, 1740 Escalona Drive, Santa Cruz, CA 95060; (408) 423-5023.

Attention Chicago AIVF members

The June issue of *The Independent* will feature a special regional report on Chicago. Send photos and information about your work-in-progress or recently completed productions to: In & Out, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., NY, NY 10012.

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FIRST RUN FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 26-May 2, NY. Fest is a 51-yr-old NYC tradition celebrating efforts & achievements of student filmmakers at the Institute of Film & TV, Tisch School of the Arts. Fest features 150 film & animation works over 7 days & provides opportunity for film devotees to see next generation of innovative, ind. filmmakers. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Contact: Steven A. Sills, Tisch School of the Arts, New York University, Department of Film & Television, Undergraduate Division, 721 Broadway, 9th fl, New York, NY 10003; (212) 998-1700.

FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL, May 28-June 6, FL. Invitational expo of film at Enzian Theater focuses on film as art. Showcases 20 artists & invites int'l entries in animation (experimental, computer, traditional), doc, avant-garde & experimental cats. Shorts programmed w/ features. Incl. awards, galas, seminars, showcases. Audience approx. 10,000. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, video (computer animation only); preview on 1/2". Deadline: Mar. 15. Contact: Mark Mullen, Enzian Theater, 1300 S. Orlando Ave., Maitland, FL 32751; (407) 629-1088; fax: (407) 629-6870.

JEWISH FILM FSTIVAL, Jul. 25-29, CA. Estab. 1981, noncompetitive fest, now in 13th yr & held in Berkeley & San Francisco, accepts contemporary films w/ Jewish subject matter; filmmaker need not be Jewish. All genres accepted. No entry fee. Formats: 3/4", 1/2", 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: Deborah Kaufman/Janis Plotkin, Jewish Film Festival, 2600 10th St, Berkeley, CA 94710; (510) 548-0556; fax: (510) 548-0536.

NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL MEDIA MARKET, May 19-21, CA. Market, now in 7th annual edition, is for educational, cultural & special interest media & is showcase for film & video producers seeking distribution of new works in educational, institutional, broadcast & home video markets. Takes place during the Nat'l Educational Film & Video Festival in Oakland. Films, videos & interactive media eligible. Entry fees: $25 for prods already entered in 1993 Nat'l Educational Film & Video Festival competition; $55 all other prods. Deadline: Apr. 9; submissions accepted thru Apr. 30 w/ late fee. Contact: Kate Spohr, National Educational Media Market, 655 13th St, Oakland, CA 94612-1220; (510) 465-6885; fax: (510) 465-2835.

NORTH CAROLINA INTERNATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, June, NC. Certificates & cash awarded in following cats: narrative, experimental, doc, animation, juror's award, southern ind. film, multicultural fim subject, North Carolina filmmaker. Open completion date. Entry fee: $20; $5 each additional entry. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Apr. 15. Contact: Jennifer Horton, Arts Council of Fayetteville/Cumberland County, P.O. Box 318, Fayetteville, NC 28302; (919) 323-1776; fax: (919) 323-1727.

ONION CITY EXPERIMENTAL FILM FESTIVAL, May 14-16, IL. Sponsored by Experimental Film Coalition, "committed to excellence in exhibition of all vital & diverse forms of experimental film, to support community which produces these films & to provide information & access for community & general public interested in medium." Entries must have been completed after Mar. 1, 1991. Fest accepts all genres of experimental film. Entry fee: $15 members/students; $20 nonmembers. Formats: 16mm, super 8; preview on 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Apr. 5. Contact: Johnny White, Experimental Film Coalition, 1467 S. Michigan Ave, 3rd fl, Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 986-1823.

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser, director of the FIVF Festival Bureau. Listings do not constitute an endorsement. Since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. In order to improve our reliability and make this column more beneficial to independents, we encourage all film- and videomakers to contact FIVF Festival Bureau with their personal festival experiences, positive and negative.

SINKING CREEK FILM/VIDEO FESTIVAL, June 19-26, TN. Leading Southern showcase & competition, now in 24th yr, for ind., noncommercial films & videos of all lengths & genres. Cats: animation, narrative, experimental & doc $8,000 in awards. Fest & Sarratt Gallery also request proposals from multimedia artists for installation June 20-July 20 to be part of fest. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Apr. 23. Contact: Meryl Truett, exec. director, Sinking Creek Film/Video Festival, 402 Sarratt, Vanderbilt, Nashville, TN 37240; (615) 322-4234; fax: (615) 343-8081.

SLICE OF LIFE FILM AND VIDEO SHOWCASE, July 9-10, PA. 11th annual fest features competitively-chosen, observational doc films & videos "which depict special moments of everyday life—those moments of truth & beauty that would otherwise go unrecognized." Narrative works & works longer than 30 min. not accepted. Winning producers brought to fest, receive cash prize & participate in "Meet the Artists" public reception & professionals' conference. Fest held during annual Central PA Fest of the Arts. Audiences in 1992 totalled 1,700. Entry fee: $25. Formats: 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: Sedgwick Heskett, director, Documentary Resource Center, PO Box 909, Lemont, PA 16851; (814) 234-1945; fax: (814) 234-0939.

STUDENT ACADEMY AWARDS, June, CA. 20th yr of competition for works by US college & univ. students supports & encourages filmmakers w/ no previous professional exp. Gold, Silver & Bronze Awards (incl. cash of $2,000, $1,500 & $1,000) for outstanding student filmmaking in animation, doc, dramatic, experimental cats. Entries must be made in student/teacher relationship in school setting & completed after Apr. 1, 1992. 60 min. max. length. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Must submit entries through regional coordinators: ME, NH, VT, MA, RI, CT to Gerald Perry, Boston Univ. School of Broadcasting & Film, Attn: Student Academy Award, 640 Commonwealth Ave, Boston, MA 02125, (617) 353-3483; NJ, PA, DE, MD, DC, OH, VA, WV, KY to Warren Bass, Dir., MFA Program, Radio-TV-Film, Temple Univ., Philadelphia 19122, (215) 787-1666; NY, Puerto Rico to Daniel Glick, Brooklyn College Film Dept., Bedford Ave & Ave H, Brooklyn, NY 11210, (718) 951-5057; NC, SC, TN, AR, GA, AL, FL, MS, LA, OK, TX, CO, NM, UT, AZ to Virgil Grillo/ Marcia Johnston, Film Studies Dept, Univ. of Colorado, Hunter 102, Boulder, CO 80309-0316, (303) 492-1531; MI, IN, WI, MN, IL, IA, ND, SD, NE, KS, MO to Dan Ladely, Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater, Univ. of NE, Lincoln, NE, (402) 472-5353; MT, WY, ID, NV, AK, WA, OR, N. CA to Bill Foster/Heather Krug, Northwest Film Ctr., Portland Art Museum, 1219 SW Park, Portland, OR 97205, (503) 221-1156; S. CA, HI to Donald J. Zirpola, Communication Arts Dept., Loyola Marymount Univ., Loyola Blvd. at W. 80th St., Los Angeles, CA 90045, (310) 338-3033. Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: Regional Coordinator or Richard Miller, awards administrator, Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, 8949 Wilshire Blvd., Beverly Hills, CA 90211-1972; (310) 247-3000; fax: (310) 859-9619.

UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI FILM SOCIETY FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 29, OH. Second edition of fest for college and independent filmmakers. Accepts animation, live action, doc, and "a variety of alternative categories." Entrants must be at least 18 yrs old. No entry fees; prize money totalling $1,300. Submt in 16mm or VHS. Deadline: Mar 31. For rules & entry form, contact: 2nd Annual Film & Video Festival, Univ. of Cincinnati Film Society, Mail location #136, Cincinnati, OH 45221; attn: R.C. Frey; (513) 556-FILM; fax: (513) 556-3313.

Foreign

HAMBURG NO-BUDGET SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, May 27-31, Germany. 9th edition of fest is forum for int'l short films & videos of all types & formats up to 20 min. 3 competitions: No Budget (under 15 min., awards Hamburg Short Film Prize; jury award & audience award; no films/videos financed by public or commercial support); Steppin' Out (under 20 min., awards Hamburg Short Film Prize, jury award, audience award, may be subsidized); 3-Minute Quicky (3 min. max, theme: "Chinese"). Special programs incl. Animationfilm, First Steps (1st short films by famous directors); Hamburg Shorts (best short films from Hamburg); Trash Nite (videos "from the bin"); Vision Bar (submitted & refused films on video). Organized by newly founded Hamburg ShortFilmAgency, center for promotion of short films. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 1/2" 3/4", Hi8, Beta; preview on cassette. Deadline: Mar.31. Contact: KurzFilmAgentur Hamburg e.V., Hamburger Kurzfilmfestival NO BUDGET, Glashüttenstrasse 27, D-2000 Hamburg 36, Germany; tel: 49 40 43 44 99; fax: 49 40 43 27 03.

HUESCA INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF SHORT FILMS, May 28-June 5, Spain. This competitive fest for films under 30 min. divided into 3 sections: int'l contest, informative & retros. No restriction on themes, except tourism & publicity films not presented. Entries must have been completed after Jan. 1, 1992. Awards, presented by 9-person int'l jury: Prix "Ciudad de Huesca", Golden Danzante (500,000 ptas); Silver Danzante (best film w/ plot); Silver Danzante (best animated); Silver Danzante (best doc); Bronze Danzante. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Apr. 1. Contact: Festival Int'l de Films de Court-Metrage "Ciudad de Huesca," Duquesa de

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Villahermosa, 2, 1º, 22001 Huesca, Spain; tel: 34 9 74 22 70 58; fax: 34 9 74 24 66 00.

LOCARNO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 3-13, Switzerland. Now in its 46th yr, fest hailed by 1993 Int'l Film Guide as "1 of world's top half dozen fests" w/ reputation for innovative programming & support of alternative visions from ind. directors. Unique open air screenings in Piazza Grande, which holds 7,000. Special sections & out-of-competition screenings. Competition accepts 1st, 2nd & 3rd fiction features by new directors, art films, low budget films, indies & cinema d'auteur. Must be over 60 min., only European premieres accepted, completed within previous 12 months. Educational, advertising & scientific films ineligible. Prizes: Golden Leopard (Grand Prix) & City of Locarno Grand Prize (30,000 SF); Silver Leopard (Grand Prix de Jury) & 2nd Prize of City of Locarno (15,000 SF); Bronze Leopard & 3rd Prize of City of Locarno (5000 SF). Films should be subtitled in French. Fest provides 5 day hospitality to director plus one rep. of films in competition. More than 100 buyers chosen from biggest US, European & Japanese distributors & TVs. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: May 1. Contact: (in NY) Norman Wang/Sophie Gluck, (212) 758-8535; fax: (212) 888-2830; (in LA) Alberto Garcia (213) 344-3753; in Locarno: Marco Muller, director, Locarno International Film Festival, Via della Posta 6, CH-6600, Locarno, Switzerland.

ODENSE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, July 30-Aug. 5, Denmark. Biennial competitive fest for short films, held "in spirit of Hans Christian Andersen ...celebration of unusual films w/ original & imaginative sense of creative delight." Cats are fairytale & experimental/imaginative, live or animated, up to 60 min. running time. Entries must have been produced after Aug. 1, 1989 & not previously shown at fest. Awards: 1st Prize (Statuette & DKK50,000); 2nd Prize to most imaginative film (Statuette & DKK20,000); 3rd Prize to most surprising film (Statuette & DKK15,000); 4-8th Prizes (Statuettes awarded by each member of jury to her/his own personal choice). Fest also has Danish Youth Jury which awards 1st Prize of Statuette & DKK5,000 & 2nd & 3rd Prizes of DKK2,000. In 1993, organizers plan to celebrate 100 yrs of "Living Images," focusing on pioneers who paved way for film to become new art form. Film may be shown on Danish TV w/ payment of normal fee to producer. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: May 1. Contact: 10th Int'l Odense Film Festival, Slotsgade 5, DK-5000 Odense C, Denmark; tel: 45 6613 1372 ext 4294; fax: 45 6591 4318.

WELLINGTON FILM FESTIVAL, July, New Zealand. Noncompetitive fest, now in 22nd yr, devised to encourage screening of new films which might not otherwise have been brought to New Zealand. Selections incl. both feature & short films that are New Zealand premieres. Sponsored by New Zealand Federation of Film Societies & Wellington Film Society, which also present Auckland Int'l Film Fest. Highlights of both fests are selected to screen in travelling film fest in South Island cities of Christchurch & Dunedin. About 60 films from over 20 countries shown annually to audiences of about 100,000. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Apr. 30. Contact: Bill Gosden, festival director, Wellington Film Festival, Box 9544, Te Aro, Wellington, New Zealand; tel: 64 4 850 162; fax: 64 4 801 7304.

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DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY avail. for dramatic 16 or 35mm prods of any length. Credits include *Metropolitan*. Call to see my reel. John Thomas (201) 783-7360.

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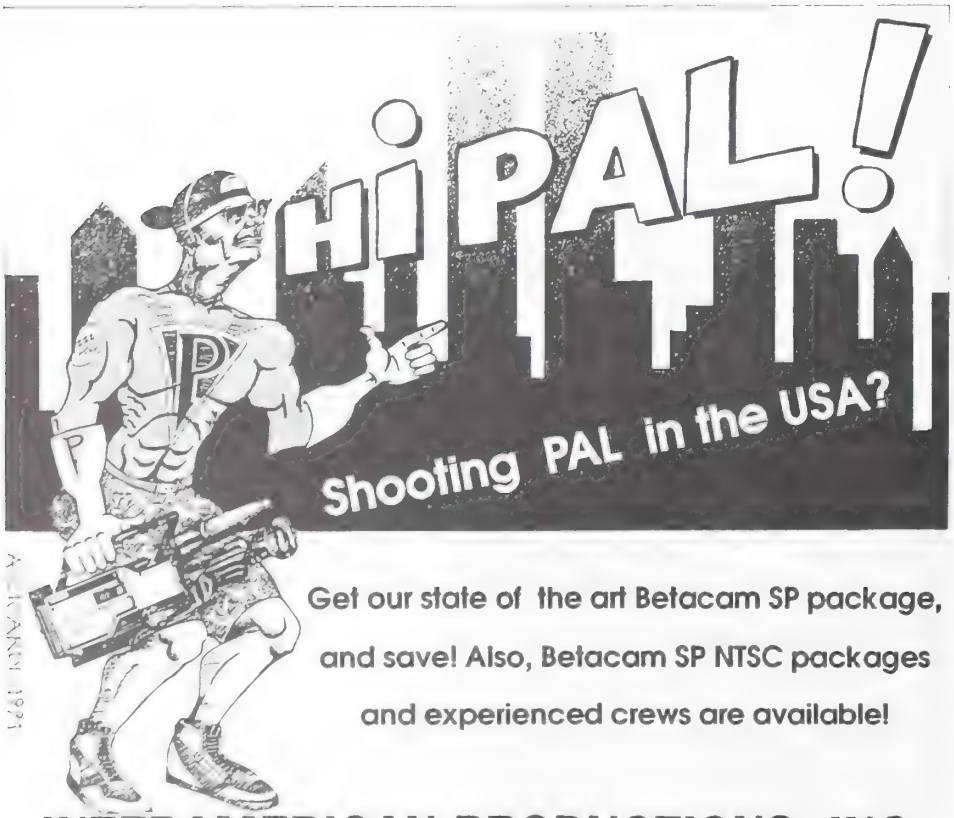
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SCRIPT SUPERVISION WORKSHOP: May 7, 8, 9 (Fri. eve. 5:30-9:30, Sat. & Sun. 9-6) in New York City w/ Lynne Twentyman, IATSE 161 871 (credits incl. *Doc Hollywood*, *All That Jazz*). Covers feature film, series TV & commercials. $295/session. Limited enrollment. (212) 580-0677.

HI8 SEMINARS. Eric Solstein's free Hi8 seminars are back! Basic Hi8 prod. covers use of consumer cameras for highest quality results. Advanced program covers postprod. alternatives & alternative equip. Eric (212) 481-3774.

INDEPENDENT PRODUCER looking for script & director for low-budget feature film. Call Jaime Sanchez (212) 754-9799.

I WANT YOUR SCREENPLAY. Determined ind. filmmaker seeks property for prod. Any style considered: dramatic, comic, unusual, mainstream. Fresh writing stands out from the pack. Submit yours to: The Kessler Company, P.O. Box 976, Village Station, NY, NY 10014.

WANTED: PROD DESIGNER, costume designer, sound mixer/designer, gaffer & editor for low-budget feature film to be shot in Hawaii in May/June 1993. Send resumés to: Lisa Onodera, 626 1/2 Santa Monica Blvd, Suite 204, Santa Monica, CA 90401.

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16/SUPER-16 6 PLATE RENTALS - Just $325 per month, free (reasonable) delivery. 2 month min. Splicers avail. Also Fast Track Dolly with 15' track, $30/day. Mini Jib (use on std. 100mm legs!), $45 day. MEDIA LOGIC (212)`924-3824.

SUPER-16 8 PLATE in fully equipped 24-hr room w/ phone & 2 blocks from DuArt available from February 27. 1-month minimum, $1,200/mo. Call Jerry (212) 664-1631.

3/4" OFF-LINE SYSTEM for rent. Cut at your location. Sony 9800/9850 decks (SP w/ Dolby & XLR output), RM 450 controller, Tascam 6-channel mixer w/ amp & speakers, 13" monitors w/ blue & underscam, TC reader. Long/short-term rental. (718) 392-6058.

16MM EDITING ROOM, great location, very low rates. Fully equipped w/ 6-plate Steenbeck, 24-hr access, in East Village, safe & clean bldg. Daily, weekly or monthly rentals. Call Su at (212) 475-7186 or (718) 782-1920.

3/4" SONY OFF-LINE editing sys. delivered to you & installed: $500/wk; $1,600/mo. 5850, 5800, RM440, Teac mixer, amplifier, 2 monitors, 2 speakers, black generator. Or edit in my space, 30th & 8th Ave. Betacam SP prod. pkg, $450/day. Tom (212) 279-7003.

3/4" SONY OFF-LINE editing system w/ comfortable office, telephone, fax machine, VHS viewing, many extras. West 72nd St. location. Call (212) 580-2727.

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DO YOU RENT Sony Betacam 400's a lot or look to buy one? I have mint 400, 18x lens w/ complete sound, lighting, & grip pkg. Looking for busy cameraperson to work it in exchange for unbeatable rate that costs less than renting or owning. Call (212) 226-7686.

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TAX TIME SHOPPING LIST

Filing through Tears. Listen to Susan Lee and Cecil Feldman CPA explain uniform capitalization and other tax filing options for independent film and videomakers in AIVF's audiotaped 1988 seminar. $12.00

Reprints from *The Independent* explain how the changes in tax law of 1988-1990 affect independent artists. Learn what you need to know about uniform capitalization, safe harbor requirements, and their consequences. Free for AIVF members; $4 nonmembers. Send SASE with 45¢ postage. to: AIVF 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012. Or call (212) 473-3400 and charge to your Visa or Mastercard.

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Conferences ▪ Seminars

AMERICAN FILM AND VIDEO ASSOCIATION celebrates 50th anniv. in 1993. Special events incl. 35th American Film & Video Festival & Conference, May 26-30, Chicago. Theme: "New Technologies: Frontiers of Media Production" w/ demos of new tech, workshops on intellectual freedom, copyright/fair use, library security systems, etc. Contact: AFVA, Box 48659, Niles, IL 60714; (708) 698-6440.

BENTON FOUNDATION announces 1st Advocacy Video Conference on uses of video as advocacy tool, Washington, DC, May 21-23. Public interest leaders, video producers & foundation executives invited. For info, incl. registration & video nomination forms, contact: Kay Johnson, Project Asst., Benton Fndtn, 1710 Rhode Island, NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 857-7829, ext. 25; fax: (202) 857-7841.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS provides support services for ind. media artists incl. education & training. Upcoming workshops incl.: Evolution of an Ind Producer w/ Thomas Allen Harris (3/3); Directing Actors (3/10); Intermediate Video Editing w/ Beta SP (3/13); Intro to Animation (3/31); Amiga Video Toaster (4/1); Intro to Video Editing (4/3); Location Sound Recording (4/3); Beginning Screenwriting (4/7). For info, contact: Media Training Dept., F/VA, 817 Broadway, New York, NY 10003; (212) 673-9371.

Films ▪ Tapes Wanted

AXELGREASE, wkly public access program, seeks experimental, narrative, animation, doc & computer imaging under 27 min. Showcases video & film on Buffalo access & around US. Send 1/2", 3/4", Beta, 8mm, or Hi8 tapes to: Axlegrease, c/o Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo Media Resources, 372 Connecticut St, Buffalo, NY 14213; (716)884-7172.

BAD TWIN, NY-based prod./exhibition collective, seeks films under 30 min. for ongoing programs in Europe & US. Alternative approaches to all genres & forms welcomed. Must have finished 16mm prints avail. Submit VHS only for preview; incl. SASE for return. Contact: Bad Twin, P.O. Box 528, Cooper Stattion, New York, NY 10276.

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable TV System, seeks works by ind. video & filmmakers for access airing. BRONXNET produces programs & whenever possible, facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, (718) 960-1180.

CABLE ACCESS SHOW seeks short drama, doc, animation & experimental films/videos. Interested parties should send 3/4" copies to: Quick Flicks c/o Eugene Haynes, 814 10th Ave, #3A, New York, NY 10019 or call (212) 642-5236.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video art interstitials to play btwn alternative music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTER FOR NEW TV (CNTV) seeks 3/4", VHS or Hi8 work for cable access show. Contact: CNTV, 1440 N. Dayton St, Chicago, IL 60622.



Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length. Deadlines for Notices will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., March 8 for the May issue). Send to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

CENTRAL AMERICAN NEWS PROJECT seeks indivs to produce news & public affairs pieces for monthly access show on Central America. Contribute footage or contacts w/ people in CA w/ film or video equip. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St, Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks works on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Laura Greenfield, Cable TV Manager, City TV, 1685 Main St, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (213) 458-8590.

COMEDY CENTRAL seeks **comedic**, short student/ind. films & videos under 3 min. to air on its flagship program, Short Attention Span Theater. No fees. Must have broadcast rights. Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes to: Josh Lebowitz, HBO Downtown Prods., 120 E. 23rd St, 6th fl, New York, NY 10010; (212) 512-8851.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TELEVISION CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" Beta & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Tanya Steele, DCTV, 87 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on varied subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, Ste 4768, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10112.

FLICKTURES seeks 2-5 min. comedy prods, any genre, any style, to air on L.A. cable access; possible deferred pay. Send 3/4", 1/2", Beta or super 8 w/ SASE to: Flicktures, c/o Barker/Morgan Prods, 12039 Allin St, Culver City, CA 90230-5802.

FORUM GALLERY, Jamestown Community College, seeks media that address environmental issues for "Artists Consider Environment" exhibition, Nov.-Dec. 1993. Deadline: April 15. Each slide, film or video must incl. name of artist, dimensions of work or running time, title & media. Send no more than 10 35mm slides, resume & related support materials w/ SASE to: Artists Consider the Environment, Forum Gallery, Jamestown Commuity College, P.O. Box 20, Jamestown, NY 14702-0020. For info, contact: Michelle Henry, (716) 665-9107.

INDEPENDENT SHORT CINEMA, a monthly series of experimental, narrative & animation shorts, seeks work on 16 and 35mm (30 min. max). Send work or preview tapes on VHS w/return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 1108 Pike St, Seattle, WA 98101. For info, contact: Galen Young or William Isenberger at (206) 682-7064, 441-6181.

IV-TV, wkly half-hour video shorts program in Seattle, seeks mini-docs, video art, found footage, news leaks. Contact: John Goodfellow or David Moore, IV-TV, 2010 Minor E., Ste B, Seattle, WA 98102.

LA PLAZA, wkly doc series on WGBH, Boston, seeks original works by ind. film/videomakers w/ themes relevant to Latinos. Contact: La Plaza/Acquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave, Boston, MA 02134.

LESBIANS IN THE CREATIVE ARTS (LICA) invites submissions of original works for an Evening w/ LICA video cabaret. Artists must own all rights. Contact: Video, Ste 443, 496A Hudson St, New York, NY 10014.

LITTLE HORN PICTURES seeks ind. produced shorts for public access program. Doc, drama, animation. Any length up to 45 min. Student work welcome. Send VHS preview tape to: Little Horn Pictures, c/o Eric Rogers, 600 McCall Rd, Greenville, SC 29607; (803) 967-0854. Incl. producer's name, address & phone number.

MINORITY TELEVISION PROJECT, Bay Area multicultural public TV station, invites programming from ind. directors, producers & writers who have person of color in key creative position & present crosscultural perspectives. Children's, entertainment, animation, features, health, education & lifestyles sought. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes (orig. must be on 3/4" or 1" for broadcast.) to: John Weber, programming director, 1311 Sutter St, San Francisco, CA 94109; (415) 394-5687.

NATIVE VOICES seeks proposals for 2 half-hour cultural affairs progs by/for Montana Native Americans. Contact: Native Voices Public TV Workshop, Dept. of Film & TV, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59717; (406) 994-6223.

NOMAD VIDEO seeks works from videomakers of all ages, backgrounds & skill levels for monthly screenings. Screenings showcase grassroots artists at changing locations around Seattle area. Send VHS, S-VHS or Hi8 & SASE to: Gavin the Nomad, 501 N. 36th St #365, Seattle, WA 98103; (206) 781-0653.

PACIFIC ARTS seeks selected domestic & foreign ind. projects—narrative, animation, doc, experimental & performance—to air on wkly cable access show. Any theme, any length. Projects credited. Submit 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Pacific Arts, P.O. Box 533, Farmington, MI 48332-0533.

PERALTA COLLEGES TV (PCTV), multicultural educational station reaching 200,000 homes in Oakland-Berkeley area, seeks challenging social-issue docs & culturally diverse TV programs. Rare alternative outlet in Bay area. Excellent exposure. Submit 3/4" or VHS tape w/ short description & letter granting local cablecast rights to: PCTV programming, 900 Fallon St, Oakland, CA 94607; (510) 464-3253.

PMS (POST-MODERN SISTERS), nat'ly touring exhibition program, is looking for innovative & challenging short films by women for future programs. Contact: Lisa Austin, (415) 648-3810 or Susanne Fairfax, (415) 751-3507.

REEL TIME, monthly film series at Performance Space 122, seeks experimental, doc & narrative films. Submit

super 8 & 16 mm to: Jim Browne, c/o Reel Time, P.S. 122, 150 1st Ave, NY, NY 10009; (212) 477-5288.

THE 90's CABLE CHANNEL seeks programs that bring alternative perspective to issues. Network of 8 full-time cable channels reaches 500,000 homes. Contact: Laura Brenton, 1007 Pearl St, #260, Boulder, CO 80302.

THE 90's seeks short (under 15 min.) doc, music & experimental Hi8 works for nat'l broadcast. Excerpts, works-in-progress accepted. Pays $150/min. Contact: Fund for Innovative TV, 400 N. Michigan Ave, #1608, Chicago, IL 60611; (312) 321-9321.

TOONTOWN RATS, Artists TV Access' new animation forum, seeks animated shorts. Send submissions to: Artists Television Access, 992 Valencia St, San Francisco, CA 94110; or contact Keith Knight, (415) 752-4037/824-3890.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, cablecast on DUTV, Drexel University's channel 54, seeks narrative, animation, experimental, performance & doc works by young filmmakers from Philly & elsewhere. Show reaches 767,000 households in 3 states. Contact: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St, Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

WILLOW MIXED MEDIA seeks Amiga-based works for Amiga Artists on the Air, prog. distributed on cable access & video. Small fee. Submit material on 3.5" Amiga disks, VHS, 3/4" tape to: Toby Carey, Willow Mixed Media, Box 194, Lenox Ave, Glenford, NY 12433; (914) 657-2914.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database, seeks submissions of films & videos for database which incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & biographical data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women of Color in Media Arts Database, Women Make Movies, 225 Lafayette, Ste 207, NY, NY 10012; (212) 925-0606.

Opportunities ▪ Gigs

OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY seeks cinema/video historian for new MFA program in Cinema/Video Directing. Ass't professor, tenure track. Begins autumn 1993. Responsibilities incl: teaching courses in this area & prod., research & creative activity, leadership in development of this degree w/in Theatre Dept. Ph.D. w/ emphasis in cinema/video history preferred. Publication record, university teaching & prod exp desirable. Prefer candidate w/ related interests or experience in theater history & criticism. Deadline: Mar. 30. Send letter of appl., vita & credentials to: Dr. Kathleen Conlin, Dept of Theater, OSU, 1089 Drake Union, 1849 Cannon Drive, Columbus, OH 43210-1266.

HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE seeks visiting ass't professor in video production/criticism. 1-yr replacement position. Pref. given to candidates using doc or mixed forms to represent oppressed & minoirty groups or alts to dominant media. A critical/analytic approach to issues surrounding cultural prod. essential. Strengths in minority 3rd World rep or writing for/about media esp. valued. Send letter, vita & letters of recomm. to: Video Prod. Search Comm., School of CCS, Hampshire College, Amherst, MA 01002. Review will begin on April 1 & continue until position filled. EEO. Women & minorities encouraged to apply.

NEW YORK LESBIAN AND GAY EXPERIMENTAL FILM/VIDEO FESTIVAL looking for guest curators for the Sept. 1993 fest. You will be involved w/ programming & publicity. For appl. & guidelines, send SASE to: NYLGEFF c/o fest comm., 503 Broadway, Ste 503, NY, NY 10012, (212) 925-5883. Deadline: Mar. 12.

Publications

CENSORSHIP & FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS: A PRIMER incl. collection of case studies & cases w/ listing of anti-censorship orgs & section on defending 1st Amendment rights. Send $10 to: American Booksellers Foundation for Freedom of Expression, 560 White Plains Rd, Tarrytown, NY 10591.

IN HER OWN IMAGE: Films & Videos Empowering Women for Future, singled out as best new media publication of 1992 by American Film & Video Assoc., features reviews of more than 80 works exploring wide range of issues affecting women around world, indexed by geography, subject, title & appropriate audience. Includes essays on int'l women's issues & uses of media for social change in community & classroom. Avail. from Media Network, (212) 929-2663.

MEDIATING HISTORY: THE MAP GUIDE TO INDEPENDENT VIDEO by & about African American, Asian American, Latino & Native American people. Edited by Barbara Abrash & Catherine Egan. Invaluable guide to multicultural historical videos incl. annotated list of 126 works; insightful essays by film scholars & programmers; overviews by media critics on media & teaching of history; alternative media directory; thematic & chronological indices. 200 pgs. $12.95 paper/$30 cloth. Avail. from New York University Press, 70 Washington Square S., New York, NY 10012; (212) 998-2575; fax: (212) 995-3833.

Resources ▪ Funds

ARTSLINK, a public-private initiative, provides support for individual U.S. artists or groups of up to five to undertake projects in Central Europe, Eastern Europe, Russia & the Baltics. Grants range from $500 to $2,500. Deadline: April 5. For more information, call (212) 643-1985.

CORPORATION FOR PUBLIC BROADCASTING announces Health Care Programming solicitation. Ind & public TV producers may submit proposals for new limited series of 3-5 episodes to be presented nat'ly on public TV. Proposals should be presented on theme of health care practices, policies & projections appropriate. Deadline: March 15. Student, instructional & industrial ineligible. For appl & info, contact Joshua Darsa (202) 879-9736 or John O'Connor (202) 879-9742.

CREATIVE TIME sponsors projects by visual & performing artists as part of ongoing CityWide series. Goal to bring art to untapped sites in NYC. No deadline; proposals reviewed every 3-4 mo. Send 5 copies of project description; description of desired public site; technical assessment, incl. consideration of vandalism, security, projects material stability & utilities description; resumés of all participants; budget; up to 10 slides of past work of each participant w/ accompanying descriptions; 1/2" or 3/4" video of past work, no longer than 5 min., w/ explanatory notes; sketches & drawings to clarify proposal & SASE to: Creative Time, 131 W. 24th St, New York, NY 10011-1942; (212) 206-6674; fax: (212) 255-8467.

ELECTRONIC ARTS GRANTS FINISHING FUNDS provide NY State artists w/ grants of $500 for completion of works of electronic art. Deadline: Mar. 15. Max. 25 grants awarded. Eligible projects incl audio & video

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EQUALITY? FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION? Pursuit of Happiness? Do your films/videos address these ideas? To create montage-commentaries on what Equality, Free Speech & Happiness mean today, Declarations, an ITVS-funded series, seeks PBS bdcst rights for variety of clips (15 sec. to 3 min.). Submit VHS, 3/4", or Beta w/ suggested clips marked, cued & briefly described ASAP to: Declarations Clip, Claypoint Prod., 53 Leonard St., NY, NY 10013. No originals. Encl. s.a.s.e. for return.

FILM PRESERVATION PROGRAM, joint program of Nat'l Endowment for Arts & Nat'l Center for Film & Video Preservation at American Film Institute, awards grants to help orgs preserve & restore films of artistic or cultural value. Tax-exempt orgs can apply. Must have archival film collection, adequate staff & equipment to carry out project. Grants are matching, generally less than $25,000. For appl. & info, contact: AFI/NEA Film Preservation Program, National Center for Film & Video Preservation at AFI, John F. Kennedy Center, Washington, DC 20566 (202) 828-4070.

FIRST FILM FOUNDATION, charitable foundation based in London, offers assistance, expertise & contacts in A/V industry for new talents w/ 1st film project for TV or cinema. All genres, incl. animation. Contact: First Film Foundation, Canalot Production Studios, 222 Kensal Road, London W10 5BN, England; (44) (81) 969 51 95; (44) (81) 960 63 02.

FOUNDATION CENTER provides info on philanthropic foundations & agencies that award grant money to arts. They also publish guidebooks. Foundation Center, 79 Fifth Ave, New York, NY; (212) 620-4320.

INTER-MEDIA ARTS CENTER offers local graphic artists w/ experience in 3-D animation and 2-D graphics free access to equipment for participation in collaborative arts projects. Org. has 3/4" A/B/C/D roll computer, chroma-key, computer graphics & 3-D animation systems. Call Michael Rothbard, IMAC executive dir, (516) 549-9666.

JEROME FOUNDATION funds indiv. film & video artists living & working in NYC metro area. Appls accepted any time, reviewed 3x/yr. Contact: Jerome Foundation, West 1050 First National Bank Building, 332 Minnesota St, St. Paul, MN 55101; (612) 224-9431.

MEDIA ALLIANCE facilitates access to state-of-the-art commercial facilities at substantially reduced rates through its unique On-Line program. Qualifying artists & orgs receive discounts of 50-80% off commercial rates for services incl. rental of video prod. pkgs, monitors & projectors; editing & postprod, special effects; film-to-tape & slide-to-tape transfers; duplication, etc. Contact: Media Alliance, c/o Thirteen/WNET, 356 W. 58th St, New York, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

MEDIA CENTER at Visual Studies Workshop announces individual regrants of $500 to emerging media artists & ind producers from upstate New York. 6 awards avail to artists working in video, audio or time-based computer art, to advance their work. Appls must be residents of upstate NY county (all counties except 5 NYC boroughs & Nassau county). Students ineligible. Deadline: March 15. Submit sample of complete project & work-in-progress on videotape (3/4", VHS, regular-8, Hi8 or Beta), on standard audio cassette or on Amiga disk. Cue samples to proper viewing/listening point on tape. Computer disks should be accompanied by viewing

The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers

When you join the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, you're doing something for yourself—and for others. Membership entitles you to a wide range of benefits. Plus, it connects you with a national network of independent producers. Adding your voice helps us all. The stronger AIVF is, the more we can act as advocate for the interests of independents like yourself—inside the corridors of Washington, with the press, and with others who affect our livelihoods.

'8 Benefits of Membership

THE INDEPENDENT

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*. Published 10 times a year, the magazine is a vital source of information about the independent media field. Each issue helps you get down to business with festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and more. Plus, you'll find thought-provoking features, coverage of the field's news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters.

THE FESTIVAL BUREAU

AIVF maintains up-to-date information on over 650 national and international festivals, and can help you determine which are right for your film or video.

Liaison Service

AIVF works directly with many foreign festivals, in some cases collecting and shipping tapes or prints overseas, in other cases serving as the U.S. host to visiting festival directors who come to preview work.

Tape Library

Members can house copies of their work in the AIVF tape library for screening by visiting festival programmers. Or make your own special screening arrangements with AIVF.

INFORMATION SERVICES

Distribution

In person or over the phone, AIVF can provide information about distributors and the kinds of films, tapes, and markets in which they specialize.

AIVF's Member Library

Our library houses information on distributors, funders, and exhibitors, as well as sample contracts, funding applications, budgets, and other matters.

SEMINARS

Our seminars explore current business, aesthetic, legal, and technical topics, giving independent producers a valuable forum to discuss relevant issues.

BOOKS AND TAPES

AIVF has the largest mail order catalog of media books and audiotaped seminars in the U.S. Our list covers all aspects of film and video production. And we're constantly updating our titles, so independents everywhere have access to the latest media information. We also publish a growing list of our own titles, covering festivals, distribution, and foreign and domestic production resource guides.

continued

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ADVOCACY

Whether it's freedom of expression, public funding levels, public TV, contractual agreements, cable legislation, or other issues that affect independent producers, AIVF is there working for you.

INSURANCE

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A production insurance plan, tailor-made for AIVF members and covering public liability, faulty film and tape, equipment, sets, scenery, props, and extra expense, is available, as well as an errors and omissions policy with unbeatable rates.

Equipment Insurance

Equipment coverage for all of your equipment worldwide whether owned or leased.

Group Health, Disability, and Life Insurance Plans with TEIGIT

AIVF currently offers two health insurance policies, so you're able to find the one that best suits your needs.

Dental Plan

Reduced rates for dental coverage are available to NYC and Boston-area members.

DEALS AND DISCOUNTS

Service Discounts

In all stages of production and in most formats, AIVF members can take advantage of discounts on equipment rentals, processing, editing services, and other production necessities.

Nationwide Car Rentals

AIVF membership provides discounts on car rentals from major national rental agencies.

Mastercard Plan

Credit cards through the Maryland Bank are available to members with a minimum annual income of $18,000. Fees are waived the first year.

Facets Multimedia Video Rentals

AIVF members receive discounts on membership and mail-order video rentals and sales from this Chicago-based video rental organization.

Join AIVF Today

Five thousand members strong, the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers has been working for independent producers—providing information, fighting for artists' rights, securing funding, negotiating discounts, and offering group insurance plans. Join our growing roster.

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PLUS: Special notice of upcoming publications

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- ❑ $45/individual
- ❑ $75/library
- ❑ $100/nonprofit organization
- ❑ $150/business & industry
- ❑ Add $18 for 1st class mailing

Foreign Rates
(Outside North America)

- ❑ $40/student (enclose copy of student ID)
- ❑ $60/individual
- ❑ $90/library
- ❑ $115/nonprofit organization
- ❑ $165/business & industry
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instructions. Film transferred to video ineligible, but innovative combination of film & video considered. Incl. resume, brief description of work samples & SASE. Send appls & requests for info to: Upstate Media Regrant 93, Media Center, VSW, 31 Prince St, Rochester, NY 14607; or call Pia Cseri-Briones (716) 442-8676.

MID ATLANTIC ARTS FOUNDATION supports arts administrators through its Visual Arts Travel Fund. Applicants must be administrator or curator of nonprofit visual or media arts org. in Mid-Atlantic state. Travel grants awarded for 50% of documented expenses incurred to attend an event (max. $200). Deadline: 6 wks before event or dates of travel. For guidelines contact: Michelle Lamuniere, VAP Associate, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, 11 East Chase St, Ste 2A, Baltimore, MD 21202; (301) 539-6656.

NAATA MEDIA GRANTS provide 2 funding opportunities for Asian American film & video prods for public TV. Open Solicitation avail to projects in all phases of prod. & wide range of genres incl doc, animation, drama, experimental & cross-genres. Grants range btwn $10,000 & $25,000, totalling $150,000. Deadline: March 15, 5 pm PST. Completion Fund supports projects in very final stages of prod. Preference given to projects needing about $10,000 that can clearly demonstrate completion & broadcast readiness as result of grant. Funds avail on first come, first serve basis btwn March 1 & Sept. 1. Due to limited funds, it is advisable to call before submitting proposal. For guidelines & appl, contact: NAATA Media Grants, 346 Ninth St, 2nd flr, San Francisco, CA 94103. For info, call Janice Sakamoto, (415) 863-0814.

NATPE Educational Foundation PSA contest for college students to produce best video PSA on subject "Combatting Racism & Religious Intolerance." Entries must be :10, :20, :30 or :60 in length. Awards: $2,500 cash & matching donation to winner's school, 1st prize. Winning PSA shown at Nat'l Assn of TV Program Executives nat'l conf. Send PSAs to: Phil Corvo, NATPE Educational Foundation, 2425 W. Olympic Blvd, Ste 550E, Santa Monica, CA 90404.

NEW YORK COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES Media Projects—pioneering effort to bring together films on video, filmmakers & scholars in public forums throughout NYC—seeks proposals for programs. Events feature presentations at screening by filmmaker or scholar, framed by talk & discussion. $350 honorarium to filmmaker, $250 to scholar w/ up to $150 addt'l in travel expenses. For appl. contact: NYCH, 198 Broadway, 10th flr, New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-1131.

NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS (NYSCA) supports NYS resident filmmakers for ind. projects in super 8, 16mm or 35mm. Grants up to $25,000 for any phase of production. Appls must be initiated by project's director & sponsored by NYS nonprofit org. (which receives up to 10% of funds). Students, filmmakers outside NYS & those who have not yet completed previously funded projects ineligible. All genres considered except educational films, those commissioned by orgs, student films undertaken for degree & films whose primary purpose is documentation of events. Deadline: March 1 for filing sponsor's appl. Contact: Individual Artists Program (212) 387-7061.

NO BUDGET FEATURE FILM SCRIPT COMPETITION. 20 film professionals have joined together to provide writer/director w/ labor & equip to produce 1st feature. Preproduction planning, crew & low-budget 16mm pkg provided to winner. Deadline: May 15. Send two copies of suitable low-budget scripts w/ SASE to: Adolph Gasser, Rental Services, 750 Bryant St, San Francisco, CA 94107. For guidelines & appl info, send SASE to above address.

O.T.O.L. VIDEO invites producers to edit projects on video at its Southern CA facility. Submit synopsis of project, cover letter describing financing plan & brief description of principal people involved. Sample reel can be submitted. For more info, contact: O.T.O.L. Video, 1800 Stanford St, Santa Monica, CA 90404; (310) 828-5662.

PHILADELPHIA FILM & VIDEO ASSOCIATION (PIFVA) offers subsidy program to help complete ind. noncommercial films/videos/audio works by PIFVA members based in greater Philadelphia area. Grants paid directly to facilities for lab/facility services at discounted rates as negotiated by artist. Avg. grant: $500; max. $1,000. Deadlines: April 2; June 15. For appl., contact: (215) 895-6594.

SCRIPPS HOWARD FOUNDATION Scholarships awarded to fulltime undergrad & grad students preparing for careers in communications industry. Scholarships range from $500 for freshmen & sophomores to $3,000 for seniors & grad students. For info, call (513) 977-3035.

US-MEXICO FUND FOR CULTURE announces 1993 program open to Mexican & US artists, intellectuals, performers, writers, museum curators & librarians residing in either country. Grants btwn $2,000 & $25,000 avail for individual or collaborative projects that ideally can be completed w/in 12 mo. period beginning July 1993. Special invitation to those presenting projects relating to art & culture of border region. Deadline: March 31. For info, contact: US Mexico Fund for Culture, Benjamin Franklin Library, Londres 16-PB, Col. Juarez, 06600 Mexico DF; tel: 211-0042 ext. 3473 or 3474; fax: 208-8943.

WOMEN IN FILM FOUNDATION FILM FINISHING FUND awards grants from $25-50K for completion & delivery of work consistent w/ WIF's goals: at least 50% of prod personnel must be women, subject matter must relate to women & be of general humanitarian concern & project must be broadcast quality for exclusive 1-yr. or 4-broadcast exhibition rights on Lifetime Cable. For guidelines: Lifetime TV Completion Grant, WIFF, 6464 Sunset Blvd, Ste 900, Los Angeles, CA 90028.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars, and workshops, and an information clearinghouse. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following individuals and businesses:

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WANTED: STORIES OF PRODUCERS V. PBS ON VIDEO RIGHTS CONTRACTS

Last August, PBS President Bruce Christensen sent a memo to major public television producers notifying them of an "important change" in PBS policy. "Starting with this fiscal year," Christensen wrote, "PBS will reserve the right to condition its program funding commitments on the availability to PBS of institutional audio visual and/or home video rights."

This fall, the Coalition for Public Television Program Access and Diversity was formed in response to the new PBS policy. The coalition includes the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) as well as organizations representing media arts centers, distributors and more than 1,000 businesses.

The core of public broadcasting supporters all have reasons to oppose the new policy.

• Producers may be forced to assign distribution rights to PBS whether or not PBS is the most appropriate or effective distributor for their programs. Programs that require special niche promotion may not reach their potential audience. Some producers may be forced not to air programs on PBS because they do not want to grant PBS video distribution rights.

• Video distributors will be deprived of access to new acquisitions, threatening the survival of their businesses while granting PBS a virtual monopoly.

• Educators and librarians will confront an environment with fewer distributors resulting in the reduced availability of educational videos. Once these products pass through a single "gatekeeper" they are likely to suffer from an increase in price as well.

• Viewers of public television will be affected as PBS's financial interest in unit video sales will hasten its retreat from challenging, innovative, diverse programming in favor of entertainment that more resembles programs available on commercial networks.

What can you do? The coalition is interested in hearing the details of any problems you have faced in contract negotiations with PBS as a result of the new policy. If you have had a problem concerning distribution rights, production grants, or feed times please contact Bill Wasserman at (202) 775-5922. Also, write or call the Coalition at 2000 M St, NW, Ste 400, Washington, DC 20036, to receive copies of their action kit and regular updates on coalition efforts.

THE ANNUAL AIVF MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Friday, March 19
6:30 p.m to 9:30 p.m.
Anthology Film Archives
32-34 Second Ave (corner of 2nd Ave and 2nd St)

You won't want to miss this year's events:
Meet fellow **AIVF** members and **AIVF** staff.
Share your current works (VHS monitors will be provided; 10 min. limit per person).
Last chance for nominations of AIVF Board of Directors.
Refreshments will be served.
Watch your mailbox for details or call (212) 473-3400.

Let Your Concerns Be Heard!

Nominate a member to the AIVF Board of Directors. AIVF board members serve a two year term and are expected to attend 8 board meetings (4/year), which are held in New York. Board members are also expected to serve on at least one of the board committees.

Please note the following nomination procedures:

1) You must be a current member of **AIVF.**
2) The person you are nominating must also be a current member. (Yes, you may nominate yourself.)
3) Write down the nominee's name, address, and phone number.
4) Your nomination must be seconded by another member in good standing.
(Please include the name and phone number of the member who has seconded this nomination.)
5) Nominations not seconded by mail can be seconded at the membership meeting.
6) Mail your nomination to our office: **AIVF**, 625 Broadway, NY, NY 10012. Attn: Stephanie Richardson or you may fax them to (212) 677-8732.

Hurry! Nominations must be received and seconded by Friday, March 19th.
No phone nominations will be accepted! *Sorry*, student members are not eligible to serve on the board.

NAMAC CONFERENCE FOCUSES ON INDEPENDENT PRODUCTION

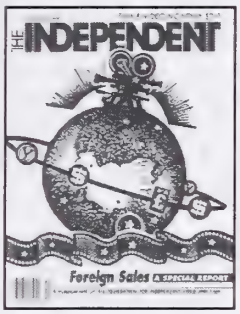
The 1993 National Association of Media Arts Centers' Conference, "Rewiring Our Networks," co-sponsored by AIVF, will be held from June 3-6 at the Chicago Cultural Center. **Preregistration:** $110 for NAMAC institutional members; $85 for AIVF members & NAMAC individual members; $160 for institutional nonmembers & $95 for individual nonmembers. Preregistration deadline: May 3. **Registration:** $140 for NAMAC institutional members; $115 for AIVF members and NAMAC individual members; $195 for institutional nonmembers; $125 for individual nonmembers. **Single-day registration** for NAMAC & AIVF members: $50; for nonmembers: $60. To register, send checks to NAMAC, 1212 Broadway, Ste 816, Oakland, CA 94612. For further information, call Mimi Zarsky at NAMAC, (510) 451-2717.

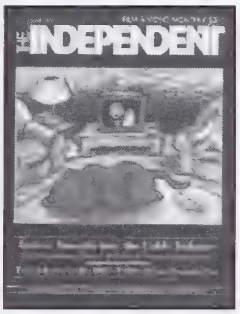
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DID YOU MISS IT?





Now's your chance to catch up on some important reading. Purchase back issues of *The Independent*, featuring informative articles on subjects ranging from foreign sales and PBS to on-location shoots and the cable industry. Some issues that merit a first (or second) look include:

June 91 - ***Artist' Inroads into the Cable Industry (HBO, the Discovery Channel, MTV, Bravo, and The Learning Channel)***

July 92 - ***On Location: Working with Film Commissions***

November 92 - ***The Other Queer Cinema: What Women Want***, **plus** ***PBS's Jennifer Lawson Talks Shop***

December 92 - ***Foreign Sales: A Special Report***

Back issues are $3.50 each (add $1.50 shipping & handling for first issue, $1 for every issue thereafter). Various back issues are available from the archives, so call if you have a specific one in mind: (212) 473-3400.

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COVER: The Kurds in Northern Iraq have hijacked the Iraqi broadcasting system and set up independent TV networks. Combining modern technology and meager resources, Kurdish TV symbolizes social change and links audiences to their past. Here, a Kurdish cameraman videotapes the exhumation of a grave site in Sulaimaniya. In this issue, a vivid photo essay by Laura Davidson and photographer Susan Meiselas captures the exploits of guerrilla TV production. Also in this issue, Jeffrey Chester and Kathryn Montgomery explore the role of independents in the future of cutting-edge technologies. Photo: courtesy Susan Meiselas/Magnum Photos, ©1992.

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WASHINGTON ROUNDUP

Who's In, Who's Out, and What Does It Mean?

CONGRESS, THE ARTS, AND THE ENDOWMENTS

A new president, 110 new members of Congress, and real bombs bursting in air again. Will this year actually prove to be any different from the 12 that preceded it? Given the cautiously optimistic, at turns confusing, atmosphere, what can the media arts community expect from the new administration? Will the two new heads of key arts endowments lead the nation towards reinvigorated cultural production complete with unabridged federal support?



The new crew in Washington, D.C., will include a change of guard at the NEA, housed at the Old Post Office Building.

Photo: Joan LaRocca, courtesy National Endowment for the Arts

President Clinton is currently considering candidates to chair the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), both of which face reauthorization in the same bill on September 30, 1993. Although Clinton campaigned on an anti-censorship platform which supported a strong NEA, the many changing faces of Congress carry with them an element of the unknown. Will it be possible to reauthorize the NEA with no content restrictions on grants? According to Jill Bond, who runs the Artsave Art Censorship Project at People for the American Way, "We have a great new opportunity with the Congress now. Our challenge is to educate these people about the role of federal support for the arts and humanities in this country. Having new leadership will hopefully allow us to operate from a position of strength in our advocacy on the Hill."

Returning members of Congress who supported freedom of expression throughout their reelection campaigns include Sidney Yates (D-IL) and Barbara Boxer (D-CA). Also, Democratic Representative Pat Williams won a close race in Montana, where his position on the arts and support for the NEA was used against him by Republican Representative Ron Marlenee. However, Les AuCoin, another NEA supporter who may appear elsewhere in the new administration, lost his Senate race in Oregon to Bob Packwood. And New York Representative Thomas Downey, a former chair of the Congressional Arts Caucus, lost his seat to a Republican challenger. Finally, Representative Bill Green, a longtime friend of the arts, lost his seat to New York City Council member Carolyn Maloney.

The Congressional Arts Caucus, previously chaired by an incredible champion of the arts, Representative Ted Weiss, who died in September, will now be chaired by New York Congresswoman Louise Slaughter, another strong advocate and excellent speaker. Also, the Federal Arts Council, active during the Carter administration but unused in the last 12 years, may be resurrected to provide some national leadership on arts and culture. This council coordinates federal arts policy and works to integrate arts programs into agencies like HUD, Transportation, Agriculture, and Energy.

Currently undergoing an innovative search process whereby various national organizations were called upon to submit recommendations, the Clinton administration will soon appoint a new NEA chair.

The new chair must be able to elevate discussion and get the organization on track, protect the endowment from attack, work with the media, communicate with Congress, and most of all, be able to justify the role of government funding for the arts.

Deborah Sale, from Arkansas, is leading the search and, it is rumored, is also pursuing the position. She worked on the Clinton campaign, headed the Arts and Humanities Task Force for the transition team, and currently serves on staff to

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Lieutenant Governor Stan Loundine. Married to New York lawyer Ted Striggles, Sale worked under Joan Mondale in the seventies in Carter's Federal Arts Council.

Other candidates include Bob Lynch, the executive director of the National Assembly of Local Arts Agencies in Washington, D.C.; Kitty Carlisle Hart, chairperson of the New York State Council on the Arts; Broadway producer Lloyd Richards, the former chair of the Theater Communications Group Board, who also served for many years on the National Council for the Arts; Philip Yenawine, the former director of the Education Department at the Museum of Modern Art in New York; and Cynthia Mayeda, head of the Dayton Hudson Foundation in Minnesota.

Although the NEA's Ana Steele is fulfilling the duties of acting chair until a new chair is appointed, Madeleine Kunin, Deputy Secretary of Education, was officially named Acting Chair in March. The appointment was the result of an arcane act, the Vacancy Act, which says the acting chair must be confirmed by the Senate. Kunin is Senate-confirmed while Steele is not. Sources inside the NEA say a new chairperson will be appointed sooner rather than later.

Outgoing chair of the NEH is Lynne Cheney, wife of former Secretary of State Dick Cheney, who served as chair for six years. The strongest candidate for her replacement is Sheldon Hackney, president of the University of Pennsylvania. A source at People for the American Way says Hackney "pretty much has the nomination locked up at this point."

The new endowment chairs face numerous controversial decisions resulting from the censorious activity carried on during the Reagan/Bush years. Congress may choose to extend the language of the current authorization beyond its expiration date in September in order to conduct a thoughtful examination of the present guidelines and their functions.

Furthermore, the NEA, struggling under the management of Bush appointee acting chair Anne-Imelda Radice, is currently involved in two legal challenges that must be addressed immediately. The new chair must deal with the appeal of the veto by Radice of three subgrants to lesbian and gay film festivals through the National Association of Media Arts Centers [see "Radice's Last Stand," January/February '93]. Second, in the case of *Finley v. NEA*, Judge Tashima held the decency clause in the NEA reauthorization to be unconstitutional. The Clinton administration may choose not to appeal.

And keep in mind, whatever comes about from inside the administration, the media arts community will remain embroiled in an ongoing battle. As People for the American Way's Jill Bond reminds us, "Our opponents on the Right, who have a vested interest in engaging in this culture war, are not necessarily going to go away because we have a new administration. We need to stay vigilant in defending First Amendment freedoms and protecting the integrity of the arts and humanities."

CATHERINE SAALFIELD

Catherine Saalfield is a film- and videomaker, curator, and consultant.

CONGRESS, THE FCC, AND PUBLIC TV

President Clinton, in a C-SPAN interview held just after the Democratic National Convention last July, said he supports public television, but "doesn't know that we have to spend more money on it now."

Also last year, public television funding received more scrutiny in Congress than in recent years. A group of Republicans, led by Minority Leader Robert Dole (R-KS), delayed for three months the vote on S. 1504, which authorized public television funding for FY1994-1996. The $1.1-billion bill finally was passed in an overwhelming 87-11 vote, but with provisions designed to promote balance and objectivity. The provisions were formally adopted at a CPB board meeting in January. Although all this may not be music to independent producers' ears, it is unlikely the government will lessen its support for public television now that Clinton is at the helm.

Clinton's choice for a new head of the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to replace Al Sykes, in office until June, will be an important one. Antoinette Cook, senior counsel for the Senate Communications Subcommittee, is the leading candidate for the position. Last year, Cook, from Chicago, formulated policy against Dole for Senator Daniel Inouye (D-HI) and, according to insiders, she will bring the same mindset to the industry's regulatory agency. David Brugger, president of America's Public Television Stations (APTS), the lobbying arm for public television, says Cook not only understands the public service policies behind public broadcasting, but can effectively negotiate with those who have the power to implement those policies. "She has always been very good at looking at everything everyone's asked for, plus all of the rationale behind it, and been able to reach an intelligent compromise among all the parties," he says.

Cook's understanding of public broadcasting's place in the broadcasting industry is vital to independent producers, especially when considering video dialtone technology, an issue she could face almost immediately. CPB and APTS filed a petition last year asking the FCC to reconsider its initial refusal to allow public broadcasting special access to the technology, which enables telephone companies to carry video programming.

Because new technology is traditionally cost prohibitive for public stations, it is imperative that space on the video dialtone spectrum be allocated to give public broadcasting a chance to compete in the marketplace of the future. "The more healthy public television," says Brugger, "the healthier



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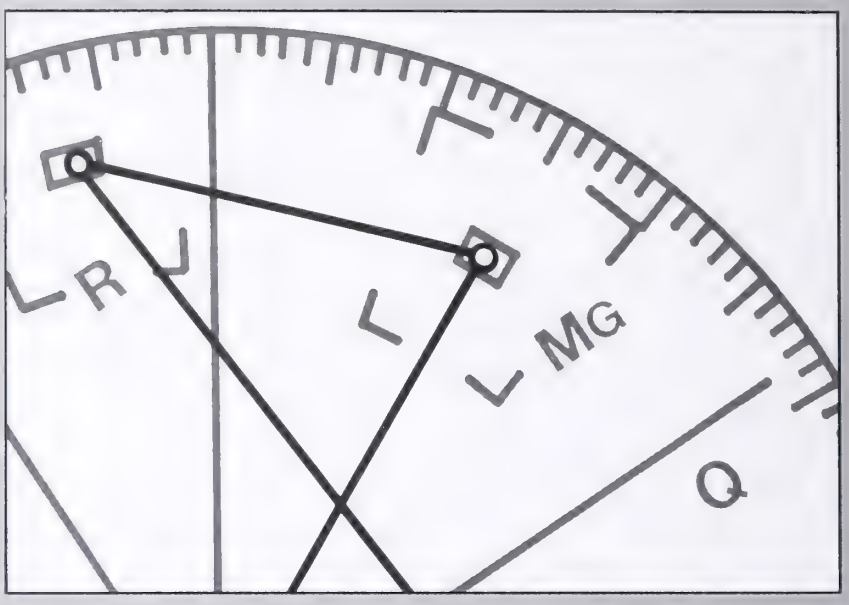
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Is PBS refusing to air films on the basis of their political content? Protestors who thought so pointed to such documentaries as Debra Chasnoff's *Deadly Deception* and *Building Bombs*, coproduced by Mark Mori and Susan Robinson.

Photo: Robin Doyno

independent producers are going to be, because it's one of the few places they have a chance to really get their work out there in quantity."

Currently, only two of the FCC's five commissioners side with CPB on the video dialtone issue. After Clinton's appointees are named sometime this spring, the number of those in favor is expected to increase to three, forming a majority.

The telecommunications subcommittee in the House of Representatives welcomed two new Democrats, Marjorie Margoles-Mezvinsky (PA) and Lynn Schenk (CA), and three Republicans: J. Dennis Hastert (IL), Paul Gillmore (OH), and Alex McMillan (NC). In the Senate, Democrats Charles Robb (VA) and John D. Rockefeller IV (WV) will replace Vice President Al Gore and Treasury Secretary Lloyd Bentsen on the telecommunications subcommittee. Rockefeller, who is married to Sharon Percy Rockefeller, president of WETA-TV Washington, D.C., is no doubt familiar with the concerns of public broadcasters, as WETA is one of the major program producers for public television.

Several new members will join the relevant appropriations committees for public broadcasting in the House and Senate, the two groups that have their hands closest to the purse strings, but officials at CPB said at press time that they were unable to gauge the support level for public broadcasting funds because CPB had not yet submitted to Congress its budget proposal for 1996.

Currently the CPB board is made up of six Republicans, two Independents, and one Democrat, each with a five-year term; six of the nine won't end their terms until at least 1996. One seat is currently open, which Clinton can fill at any time. Another seat will be open this fall and two more in 1994.

According to Donald Marbury, who heads CPB's Television Program Fund, the department financially responsible for the Independent Television Service (ITVS), the political makeup of the board has had little effect on ITVS funding. "We've had boards that were dominant Democrat and now dominant Republican, and I've found that every one of those board members has placed a premium on creativity."

However, Jeffrey Chester, codirector for the Center for Media Education, disagrees. "During the Reagan/Bush years, the CPB board defined a narrow agenda for public telecommunications, [by which] independents have found themselves further marginalized. What we're expecting out of the Clinton Administration is the appointment of CPB board members who see the need to reenvision public television...to ensure that it provides a diverse array of programming, from quality children's fare to provocative documentaries."

The Television Program Fund has a mailing list of 7,000 independent producers, and Marbury is determined not to allow any funding shortfalls within his department to affect grant funding. With $1.4-million less in interest income to work with this year than in the past, he let discretionary dollars take the hit; ITVS in 1993 will continue to receive its annual $6-million from CPB, the minimum amount recommended by Congress since ITVS's creation in 1988.

JOHN GALLAGHER

John Gallagher covers public television for Broadcasting *magazine.*

COALITION BLASTS SELF-CENSORSHIP AT PBS

A newly formed coalition is accusing PBS of refusing to air celebrated documentaries because they're too political. In 1992, *Deadly Deception: General Electric, Nuclear Weapons, and Our Environment* won an Oscar for Best Documentary Short. Two years earlier another documentary, *Building Bombs*, was nominated for Best Documentary Feature. Both films were rejected by PBS.

The coincidence seemed suspicious to Mark Mori, who coproduced *Building Bombs* with Susan Robinson, and he began to do a little digging. Mori discovered that other acclaimed "political" films had been rejected, including Vivienne Verdon-Roe's *Women for America, For the World*, 1986 Academy Award for Best Documentary Short; Robert Richter's *Gods of Metal*, 1982 Academy Award nomination; *Dark Circle*, produced by Chris Beaver, Judy Irving, and Ruth Landy, Academy Certificate of Special Merit in 1982 and a National Emmy when *P.O.V.* finally aired the film. Could it be these films that address hot political topics and are of recognized merit didn't meet PBS' normal quality-control standards? Mori didn't think so and organized an ad hoc group, the Coalition vs. PBS Censorship, to focus public attention on the issue. So far, Mori has been able to attract endorsments from Oliver Stone, Lawrence Kasdan, Robert Young, and Michael Moore, finance a full-page ad in *Daily Variety*, and mount a demonstration outside the Loew's Santa Monica Hotel timed to coincide with PBS's presentation before the National T.V. Critic's Association in January.

According to a PBS spokesperson, Debra Chasnoff's *Deadly Deception* was rejected because it was funded by INFACT, an activist organization that advocates corporate accountability, thereby violating PBS guidelines, which state that "in a program of a public affairs or controversial nature, if there is a very clear and direct connection between the interests, products, or services of the potential underwriter and the subject of the program which would likely lead the public to conclude that the program has been influenced by the funder, the proposed program funding will be unacceptable." As for *Building Bombs*, Jennifer Lawson, PBS's executive vice president for national programming, says that the program was not clearly organized and "did not give adequate voice to other sides and other aspects of the issues that it was raising."

The coalition, on the other hand, argues that the two rejections are part of a pattern of PBS censorship. Mori rebuts Lawson's charge of balance in his own film by pointing out that five pronuclear representatives were included in the program and

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that the film was reviewed for accuracy by top experts on nuclear production and waste. In fact, *Building Bombs* may still make it into the PBS schedule as a part of *P.O.V.*, PBS' repository for point-of-view programming, which has recently expressed interest in the film.

However, the case surrounding *Deadly Deception* is more complex. INFACT contracted Chasnoff to make *Deadly Deception* and the organization holds the copyright. Nevertheless, Chasnoff argues that the film is not self-interested. "It's not about how great INFACT is," she says, adding that several PBS affiliates have aired the film. (Affiliate stations are not constrained by PBS guidelines.)

Mori accuses PBS of using its guidelines "like a sledgehammer" against grassroots groups like INFACT. Contrary to their policy, he says, PBS regularly broadcasts programs such as *Wall Street Week*, underwritten by corporations that have a stake in the subject matter. According to Karen Doyne, PBS Director of National Press Relations, *Wall Street Week*, which is underwritten by Prudential and Traveller's Insurance, does not violate PBS guidelines because it is a program that "deals broadly with issues facing the financial community." Doyne points out that the series was originally funded solely by PBS, and although she admits that at times the series may touch upon a story that deals with interests held by its underwriters, it is not a significant proportion of the total show. "The question," she emphasizes, "is whether an organization has a direct self-interest. Every production is a judgment call," she says. "The guidelines serve as a framework. The real issue is 'Are PBS' guidelines appropriate and are they applied consistently?'"

While Doyne argues that PBS guidelines serve the film community well by assuring that programs aired on PBS "have a high standard of integrity," Chasnoff argues that the guidelines are presented "as if they are neutral." But she points out that the situation of a corporate-sponsored program and an independent producer making a show about a grassroots movement are not equivalent. Calling for a kind of "affirmative action" she says, "We all know that the views of people who are not financed by corporations are harder to get funding for."

PBS agreed to meet with the coalition on March 24 at which time Mori planned to ask PBS to reconsider the two rejected films. The coalition also intended to express its concern regarding the Empowerment Project's recent documentary *The Panama Deception*, which is currently pending PBS approval and which the coalition fears PBS will reject. While willing to respect PBS' editorial autonomy, Mori says, "We're trying to get out in front and put PBS on notice."

The coalition's aims, however, are far broader than obtaining PBS broadcasts for a couple of films. "We're talking about a much bigger problem than these two programs," Mori says. "We'll be talking about additional documentary series and the selective enforcement of these guidelines." Chasnoff notes that there is only one national series open to independents that includes political documentaries. That series, *P.O.V.*, provides only three or four slots each season since it mixes political programs with lighter, cultural fare.

The deeper issue underlying this dispute is how PBS chooses to wend its way along the treacherous path between adherence to its original Congressional mandate for diverse programming and pressure from independents to comply with that mandate, and PBS' financial dependence on corporate underwriters and the good will of Congress. Cara Mertes, producer of WNET's *Independent Focus* series for the last four years, says that PBS programmers experience pressure to avoid controversy whether at the local or the national level.

WNET was one of only three PBS affiliates to air *Deadly Deception*. Mertes made a case for the film by pointing out that it was not a vanity production designed to trumpet the virtues of INFACT and that individual donations to INFACT funded the film. WNET allowed the program to be aired, she says, because it was slated for *Independent Focus*, a well established, point of view series that airs late at night. Ultimately, General Electric's response to the broadcast was not punitive. At the request of General Electric, WNET included a statement of the company's position as part of the wraparound. Yet the lesson to be learned, Mertes cautions, is not necessarily that PBS programmers exaggerate how much pressure corporations will bring to bear on them. She points out that something that happens to an infrequent underwriter like General Electric may make a more generous PBS corporate sponsor wary in the future.

Ironically, PBS needs series like *P.O.V.* (and others that the coalition will ask PBS to add to their schedule) in order to plausibly argue that they deal with controversial issues and are fulfilling their Congressional mandate. To wit, in discussing the coalition's complaints, Jennifer Lawson repeatedly pointed to *P.O.V.*'s broadcast of *Roger and Me* to prove that PBS airs controversial programming and refuses to cower before underwriters. Yet PBS also needs to minimize its exposure. "Often," Mertes says, "PBS feels they can't invest in taking the heat. They need to invest in survival instead."

BARBARA OSBORN

Barbara Osborn is a freelance writer living in Los Angeles.

WHAT'S IN NAME'S NAME?

There's one in every high school: a teacher who shows *Atomic Cafe* in class and assigns students to write papers on sitcoms or the six o'clock news. In a effort to bring media arts education to the attention of mainstream teachers, the recently formed

National Alliance for Media Education (NAME) has undertaken the project of compiling a comprehensive regional directory of media arts educators, organizations, and resources.

The National Endowment for the Arts has provided NAME, which functions under the auspices of the National Alliance for Media Arts & Culture (NAMAC), with a $50,000 grant to complete the project. According to Arthur Tsuchiya, assistant director of the Media Arts Programs for the NEA, this is the first program focusing on media arts education the NEA has funded since it formed a study group on the field three years ago. "Media arts education is an area that has been targeted over the last few years," he stated.

NAME is driven by an if-you-can't-beat-them-join-them philosophy: because children spend so much time watching television, it is NAME's belief that students need to learn how to better evaluate media through both critical analysis and hands-on media production. According to first-year project coordinator Robin White, the directory will bring a new slant to the emerging concern over the need for media education. The directory represents "an effort to put arts in media education in a way the public can understand. Artists are always marginalized," says White. Deborah Leveranz, director of education of the Southwest Alternate Media Project (SWAMP) and a member of NAME's national steering committee, states that NAME will be working towards "developing future artists and a media-literate public."

White, a producer and curator for media works by young people, hopes that NAME will strengthen the media arts community by working with a number of different arts education organizations. "What we're hoping is that by collaborating, we can set a precedent for working in the media arts education field." Leveranz also states that "when people are doing things in isolation, they're not getting the recognition" they deserve. Kathleen Tyner of Strategies for Media Literacy and a member of NAME's steering committee, adds that the diversity of NAME's members, who come from such areas as education, arts, industry, and government, makes the organization unique. "NAME provides context for a discourse between different fields," Tyner says.

The final product will theoretically resemble a telephone book of the resources available in the media arts education field. The first section will give a short reading about each person or organization and the tapes, syllabi, and books that each has produced. The second part will list regional media organizations, so that an educator will know whom to contact in media education in any part of the country. Although there are no definite plans for publication and distribution, White says that NAME hopes to make the directory available to mainstream educators from the pre-school to the high school levels. White estimates that the book will be completed by the summer of 1994.

NAMAC members concerned with education

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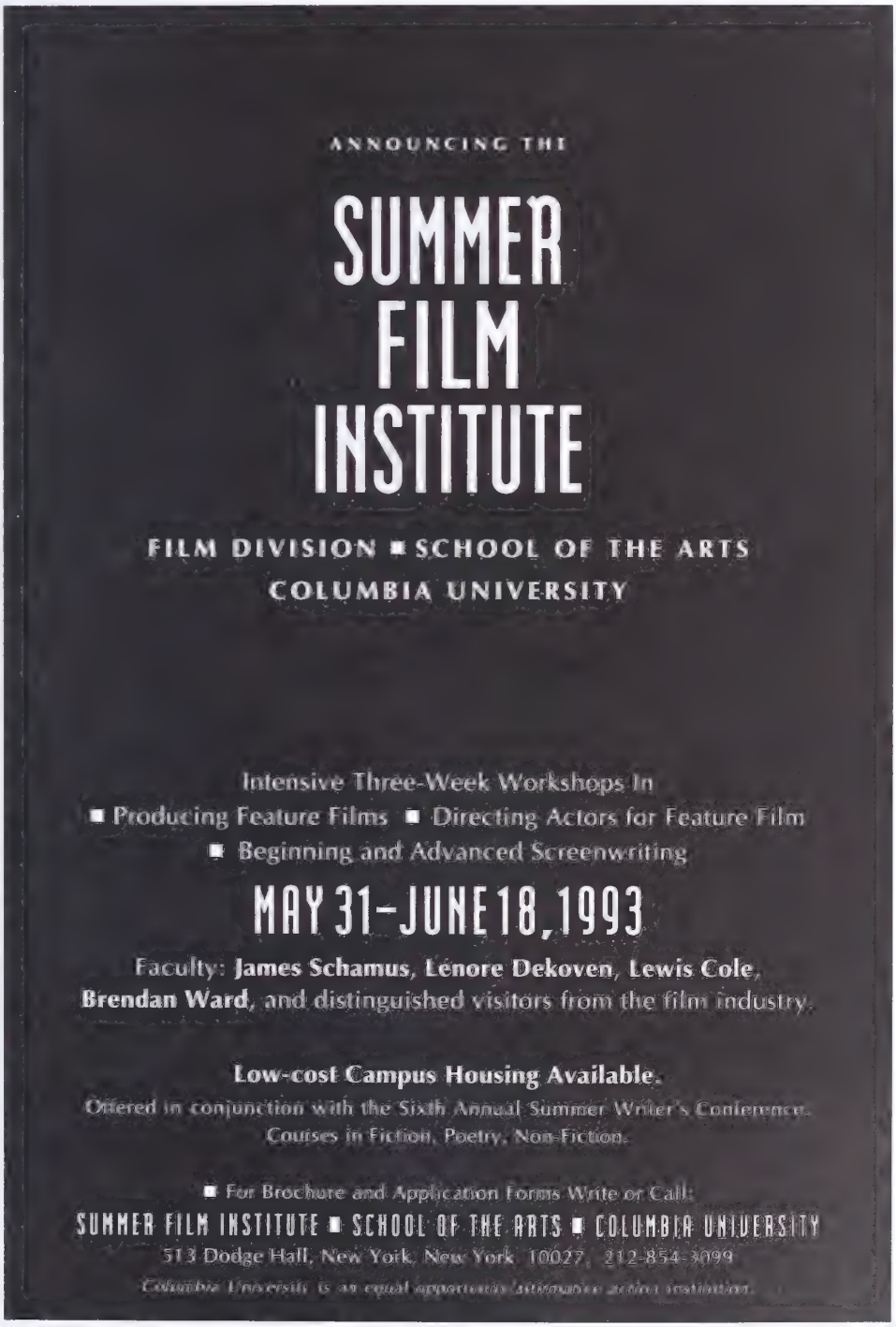
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began thinking about the NAME project at a conference in Portland, Oregon, in July 1991. But it was not until April 1992, at a conference hosted by SWAMP, that NAME was actually founded. "Media arts education was the hot issue—we knew that without strong education we were not going to have audiences and makers," says Leveranz. NAME will be working with the National Telemedia Council, which began designing a database to organize names of organizations in the educational media field. NAME has begun sending out survey forms to all known individuals and organizations involved with media education requesting basic information.

White says that NAME hopes to continue beyond its first year in order to pursue other projects that will make media arts resources easily accessible to educators. She cites a compilation reel of student and independent art works and a media education resource guide as other possible endeavors for NAME.

To have your name, organization, or resource listed with NAME, please send a postcard with the name and address, to: Robin White, National Alliance for Media Education, c/o OEP, 84 Wooster St, New York, NY 10012.

WENDY GREENE

Wendy Greene is a freelance writer living in Brooklyn, New York.

DISCOVERY CHANNEL SPOTLIGHTS INDEPENDENTS

Those tuning in to the Discovery Channel for their usual dose of nature and military documentaries this month are in for a big surprise. Throughout April, the cable channel will spotlight U.S. independent filmmakers on its regular Sunday night series, *Discovery Sunday*.

Discovery's programming team chose seven documentaries: *Blood in the Face* by Kevin Rafferty, Anne Bohlen, and James Ridgeway, which looks at Neo-Nazism in America; *Little People*, by Jan Kravitz and Thomas Ott, which deals with the everyday trials of dwarves; *Legends* by Ilana Bar-Din, Claes Thulin, and Sarah Jackson; Lisa Law's *Flashing on the Sixties*, which explores the era of hippies and spiritualism; and *Atomic Cafe* by Pierce and Kevin Rafferty and Jayne Loder. *Radio Bikini* and *Farewell Good Brothers*, two documentaries by Robert Stone, round off the month's selections.

Most of the films in the tribute are not new and have already been shown in theaters and on television, both in the U.S. and abroad. Some, like *Blood in the Face* and *Atomic Cafe* achieved notable success in the U.S. and were also distributed in Japan, Europe, Australia, and New Zealand.

Discovery's tribute signifies the channel's attempt to air more varied, original work. According to programming executives, its commitment to independent works won't end in April. With its large coproduction budget, Discovery is a possible funding source for independents.



Atomic Cafe is one of seven independent documentaries slated to appear on the Discovery Channel's *Discovery Sunday* series in April during the network's month-long tribute to independents.

Courtesy filmmakers

One example of how Discovery has opened its airwaves and pocketbooks to the work of independent films is Academy Award nominee Robert Stone's documentary *Farewell Good Brother*. Stone coproduced the documentary with Discovery, and, rather than being distributed to theaters initially, the film will premiere on Discovery on April 4. Stone says part of the reason coproductions with cable TV are becoming an outlet for independent producers is that other sources of funding may be drying up. "The days when you could do megabucks documentaries from grants is over," he added. "We all dream of theatrical success, but theatrical distribution is not generally a money-making enterprise. You can't go on planning on it."

How much control each side has in the making of the production varies. In the case of *Farewell Good Brothers*, a documentary that explores belief in extra-terrestrial life, Stone had already begun filming when he approached Discovery. Executives in production saw the rushes, liked them, and agreed to fund completion of the film with Stone retaining complete control. "They were great. They left me totally alone and gave me money," he said. As a filmmaker with an Academy Award nomination (for 1987's *Radio Bikini*, a look at the U.S. government's nuclear tests on the Bikini Atoll) already under his belt, Stone admits his was not a typical case, although he said the channel is looking for "more high-profile, quirky, or weird things to broaden their base."

Many at Discovery agree. "We are always interested in dealing with independents," said Chuck Gingold, executive vice president in charge of programming. "We have a lot of opportunities zfor classic documentaries, one-offs, limited series. They occupy some primary programming time."

Discovery encourages filmmakers looking for coproduction partners to mail a quality treatment with a clearly outlined subject and bios of the people involved in production. "The subject matter is very important," said Gingold, "and every treatment is given a full read." Although Gingold said he is not at liberty to discuss Discovery's coproduction budget, he hinted that the network deals with small and high-end budgets. "If it is something we really want, we'll find a way to fund it," he said.

INGALISA SCHROBSDORFF

Ingalisa Schrobsdorff is a freelance arts writer living in New York City.

JOHN DORR: 1944-1993

John Dorr came to Hollywood as a Yale graduate wanting to make his own films. He quickly learned that his movies weren't Hollywood's, so he created his own system of movie making and called it EZTV, L.A.'s first video equipment access and exhibition center.

EZTV, which will celebrate its tenth anniversary this spring, became the inspirational center for independent work that didn't fit Hollywood or art world molds. Working out of a loft on Santa Monica Boulevard, Dorr offered an exhibition venue for work that couldn't be seen elsewhere and a helping hand for producers with small budgets, sacrificing time he might have spent on his own videos. During his memorial service, artist Susan Mogul referred to EZTV as a family whose door was always open no matter how chaotic or overextended they were.

BARBARA OSBORN

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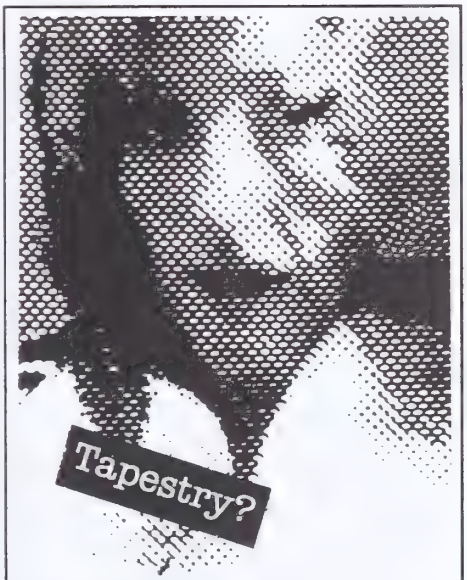
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Peter Friedman

DOCUMENTARIAN

Silverlake Life: The View from Here

Peter Friedman has just come from a screening of his feature-length documentary *Silverlake Life: The View from Here* at Sundance, where it picked up the documentary competition prize, plus the Freedom of Expression Award. He surveys the crowded reception area. "This kind of hubbub, interfacing stuff, is not my favorite part of filmmaking," Friedman admits. "Particularly with this film, in that it's about the death of two people I was very close to. It's very, very difficult for me to promote it."



Courtesy videomaker

Silverlake Life is the story of filmmaker Tom Joslin and his lover of 22 years, Mark Massi. When the two were diagnosed with AIDS, Joslin decided to shoot a video diary. Shot primarily in their home in the Silverlake section of Los Angeles, *Silverlake Life* is a powerful chronicle of what it is to live, and die, with AIDS. Because Joslin and Massi videotaped themselves, the documentary avoids the trap of voyeurism. Ultimately, it is a story of love, demonstrating the depth of feeling and commitment between the two men.

Friedman had been a student of Joslin's in 1976 when both were at Hampshire College in Massachusetts. "I was Tom's protegé," Friedman recalls. "He was the reason I got into film, my first film teacher. And he was the first openly gay person I ever knew, a role model for me."

When Joslin's strength began to fail, Friedman helped Massi with the taping. Eventually Friedman took over the project with Joslin's blessing. But in so doing, Friedman faced his own personal struggle. There was first the ordeal of reviewing over 40 hours of tapes—replaying his friends' physical decline and Joslin's death. "I spent about two months just looking at the material, thinking about it, and transcribing it before I really decided that I was going to do it."

Then Friedman had to deal with his biggest conflict: how to make a film that would be true to his mentor and teacher's vision. He was able to proceed only after deciding that he shouldn't try to second-guess what Joslin would have done, but make it his own film. "I knew that it was more of a betrayal to Tom to try to imitate him than it was to make the best film that I could," says Friedman. "The fact that I did what I wanted to do with the film is central to what the film is about: the premature loss of the creative vision that was Tom's life."

Silverlake Life does not hold back in its portrayal of the devastating physical effects of AIDS. For many general audiences, it is a revelation to watch an adult body weaken, discolor, and waste away to 60 pounds. Massi films his lover's body moments after Joslin dies. Less than a year away from his own death, he is grieving audibly and continues taping as funeral home officials put the skeletal remains into a body bag and carry Joslin away. It is a powerful scene which leaves many audiences numbed.

"Homosexuality and death are two things that this culture is not very good at dealing with. In the case of AIDS, it's where they both come together," Friedman observes. But neither he nor his producers, Doug Block and Jane Weiner, consider *Silverlake Life* a film about AIDS and death. Rather, it's about this particular relationship, which was positive, caring, and filled with meaning. Says Friedman, "Tom and Mark believed in living their lives honestly and making examples out of themselves and holding up their experience. They believed, and I agree, that there's a universality to be found in the personal, if it's articulated properly."

Friedman previously produced and directed the documentaries *I Talk to Animals*, about an animal therapist, and *Fighting in Southwest Louisiana*, which follows the daily life of an openly gay rural mailman. "They're all portraits," Friedman notes. "And they're all portraits of people who in one way or another are outsiders, and who have invented themselves."

Friedman believes in combining the intimacy, flexibility, and relatively low cost of shooting in small-format video with professional high-end postproduction. *Silverlake Life* was shot on Hi8 and S-VHS, remastered on Beta SP, roughcut on an Avid, on-lined on D-1, digitally mixed on Screensound, and finally transferred to film for festival and theatrical release.

Says Block, "We felt strongly that this documentary is so powerful and the subject so important that, despite its small-format video origins, it deserved to be a feature film." The film has been picked up by Zeitgeist for theatrical distribution. In addition, it will kick off *P.O.V.*'s season in June and will also appear that month on Channel Four in the UK and on the European cultural channel Arte, coinciding with the International AIDS Conference in Berlin.

LORRI SHUNDICH

Lorri Shundich is a screenwriter living in New York City.

Srinivas Krishna

WRITER/DIRECTOR

Masala

A "masala" is a combination of spices or, figuratively, any spicy combination of elements. And writer/director/star Srinivas Krishna's first feature, *Masala*, is a heady mix indeed, giddily deploying genre—lifted both from Hollywood and Bombay—to skewer the idiosyncrasies of diasporic Indians and interrogate the meaning of life between cultures.



Courtesy Strand Releasing

Krishna plays a junkie (also named Krishna) orphaned years before in a tragic Air India crash. After years away, he returns to his family in Toronto to find some stability and money. Instead, he finds his uncle Lallu conniving with Sikh terrorists to monopolize the world sari trade. Lallu's cousin Tikkoo is locked in a battle with the Canadian post office over control of a priceless stamp. A very blue Hindu god (also named Krishna) is harangued by a bossy grandmother into doing the family favors. The kids are facing arranged marriages with horror. Krishna (the human character) jumps into the fray, insulting his uncles and graphically bedding Tikko's daughter, Rita, until his past and the city's acculturated violence combine to cut short his visit home.

A handsome and self-assured man in his late twenties, Krishna (the director) was involved in theater production and made two short dramatic films in New York before returning to his childhood home in Toronto to make *Masala*. He sees the film coming from "a long history of what happens when you go abroad. You step outside of caste and religion. You become an individual, and there is great resistance to this in India. And yet all of the nation's recent history has been about returning diasporas.

"What the film talks about is the construction of identity in the face of resistance to individuation," Krishna continues. "When I said it is a film about masala, it is about locating this issue—in a state of politics, a state of mind, a state of psychology, a state of culture, a state of body. And to hit it from every angle."

A big part of *Masala*'s success—it has already enjoyed strong releases in Canada and Great Britain and will be opening theatrically in the US in April—is Saeed Jaffrey, star of Stephen Frear's *My Beautiful Launderette* and *Sammy and Rosie Get Laid*. Jaffrey plays three parts in *Masala*—sari mogul Lallu, postal worker Tikkoo, and the great god Krishna himself.

"I just sent him the script," recalls Krishna. "And when I called him, he said he really related to it. So, when I got some money together, I went to see him. That was the first time I heard the script read out loud. It was so wonderful, that on the spot I asked him to play all three parts.

"Saeed's participation dramatically changed the nature of the project. Originally I intended to make a very cheap film, using friends and favors. But with Saeed, the budget [$1.5-million] and scope of the project escalated to a degree I didn't at all expect."

Masala has infuriated many British and Canadian community elders, one of whom called the film "immoral and unwatchable," as much for the steamy sex between its Indian principals as for its biting satire of community politics. "This shrillness of reaction really shocked me," says Krishna. "I wondered what I'd done. I believe it may partially be a question of age—that those people who hated the film may inhabit an airplane in a way that is very different from the way I inhabit an airplane."

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Come again?

"You see, we see space and time in a very different way. This comes as much from a multitude of transmigrations as from having televisions and telephones. The way my film looks and feels comes directly from the problems of a rootless life—too much travel, too much technology."

Those same elders have watched their children flock to the movie in droves. In fact, among hip young children of Indian and Pakistani families, Krishna has become something of a sex symbol.

"I think they like the irreverence of the film," Krishna admits. "There is a great deal that is surreal about life in the diaspora, and I think these kids connect with that. This is also a representation of them, which they can't find in Hollywood or the Hindi movie houses."

About his own appeal, Krishna is more coy. "I find it sort of funny," he says. "I only cast myself at the last minute, when we couldn't find an actor we wanted. I had to be talked into it."

NOAH COWAN

Noah Cowan interviewed Srinivas Krishna at the International Film Festival of India in New Delhi, which he was attending as a freelance journalist and programmer for the Toronto Festival of Festivals.



Photo: Tim Daly, courtesy filmmaker

Nora Jacobson

DOCUMENTARIAN

Delivered Vacant

At its world premiere last October at the New York Film Festival, Nora Jacobson's documentary feature *Delivered Vacant* received excellent reviews and an ovation from the sold-out audience. In January, it was well-received at Sundance. But like most documentaries seeking distribution today, this film about the political and sociological problems of housing in Hoboken, New Jersey, has not been an easy sell, no matter how engrossing and intelligent. Still, its prospects are better than most, for if there's one thing that characterizes Jacobson and her work on this project, it's persistence.

Delivered Vacant was over a decade in the making. It started when Jacobson moved to Hoboken in 1980, after getting her Masters degree from the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, where she studied film with Stan Brakhage, Owen Land (a.k.a. George Landow), Fred Camper, and P. Adams Sitney. While in Chicago, she had begun to shoot a series of films on the city, in the spirit of ethnographic research.

"When I moved to Hoboken," the filmmaker recalls, "I wanted to make a series of films on what a city is. I started with the idea of making five or six short films—on the local bakery, a sweatshop, an Italian feast, a Puerto Rican dance, a fire." One film concerned a shelter for the homeless which opened in her neighborhood in 1982; she planned to show the daily routine of the residents as they checked in, ate, slept, then left in the morning. But as she talked to the shelter's residents, she realized many had been displaced from the local rooming houses which were being converted into condos. Some of these had been burned to force the tenants out.

"By 1983-84 real estate development was the hot topic of conversation in Hoboken," Jacobson says. "In the 1985 mayoral [campaign], housing had become the main issue. I began to see that there was no easy solution to the problems of housing. The tenants need protection to ensure adequate housing, but the landlords own the property and need to use the property as they see fit."

Jacobson was also working on a short film about a young woman who worked on Wall Street and lived in a rental apartment in Hoboken. The filmmaker was interested in showing the ritual of the daily commute on the PATH train and the woman's interaction with shopkeepers and neighborhood residents. As Jacobson filmed, she became aware of the interrelations between all the different pieces—how the personal stories concerning gentrification, displacement, and tenant rights were connected to the political stories of the mayoral campaigns and city council meetings.

The idea of a feature-length film, rather than a series of shorts, crystallized by 1990. By then, both the personal and political stories had progressed. A "people's mayor" had ousted the incumbent; tenant-rights legislation had finally passed. But this was too late for many of the people featured in the film, who had already lost their homes to development. Jacobson herself was among those affected. She was forced to move after her building went up in flames, and the owners subsequently converted it into a condo.

The strength of *Delivered Vacant* lies in its comprehensive overview of a complex situation. The accumulation of detail and the multiple perspectives are impressive; reviewers have pointed out the novelistic sweep of the film, with comparisons to Balzac and Dickens. Jacobson provides not only a decade-long chronicle of the gentrification process in Hoboken, she does so with the knowledge and familiarity of an insider. Her method of shooting—she was often the sole crew member—afforded her an intimacy which is rare, abetted, of course, by the fact that Jacobson was filming her neighbors, friends, and acquaintances.

"The kind of training I had at the Chicago Art Institute was such that I was encouraged to work by myself, so working without a crew—doing the camera work, the sound, and the editing by myself—seemed natural," she explains.

"The idea of creating a feature-length film that could be shown theatrically didn't happen until relatively late in the filming process," Jacobson adds, "but I had been encouraged by films like *Streetwise*, documentaries which have been shown theatrically."

Jacobson has pulled off the difficult feat of creating a highly accomplished first feature. And she has successfully constructed a film that shows "what a city is." The question now is whether audiences will be given the chance to see the fruits of her decade-long labour.

DARYL CHIN

Daryl Chin is a writer and curator living in New York City.

Alberto Barbera

FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

Festival Internazionale Cinema Giovani

Forget the shroud (it's not even on view). Turin (Torino), Italy is one of the most striking urban landscapes in Europe. The airy, arcaded neoclassical structures downtown are breathtakingly lit at night—it's a tasteful Las Vegas. But Turin is an urban dialectic: the city is also the home of Fiat, the large working-class neighborhoods that serve it, and their rebellious children, the Red Brigades.

What has remained consistent in Turin, at least over the past decade, is a commitment to young, new independent film and video. (I met a former Red Brigade executioner there who was sentenced to prison for the next 120 years. Allowed to work outside during the day, he has completed a film internship and is now writing a dissertation on an obscure Italian director of the 1930s.) A young man named Mimmo De Gaetano heads the Mediatheque, which, with city funds, catalogs and helps preserve all of the independent Italian films and videos of the last 10 years. The local cinematheque programs films in three theaters every day. And, since 1982, the Festival Internazionale Cinema Giovani (International Festival of Young Cinema)—a model of efficiency, graciousness, and thoroughness—has presented new works to enthusiastic crowds every November. Its director since 1989 is Alberto Barbera, a gentle, soft-spoken man of 42 who came to Turin in 1969 from a small, nearby town to study and completed a dissertation on film history and criticism.

According to Barbera, the festival was founded in 1982 as a showcase for independent works (including super 8 and video) with "youth" themes, made by directors under 35. By 1984 it began shifting to a broader mix, with a special interest in the Third World and the Far East. In 1986 the youth theme focus was relaxed and the age limit removed. (Barbera did say, however, that the young age of the directors is still an important component in his decision to include films.) The festival operates on a budget of less than $1-million, two-thirds of which comes from the city of Turin. No political agenda exists, Barbera claims. He single-handedly selects all of the feature films in both the competing and noncompeting sections. (Stefano Della Casa chooses the shorts and videos.) Features in competition must be either first or second works and need only be Italian premieres. "Rotterdam and Locarno are places that are references for the independent cinema," says Barbera. "We would like to be the Italian reference for the independent cinema of the world."

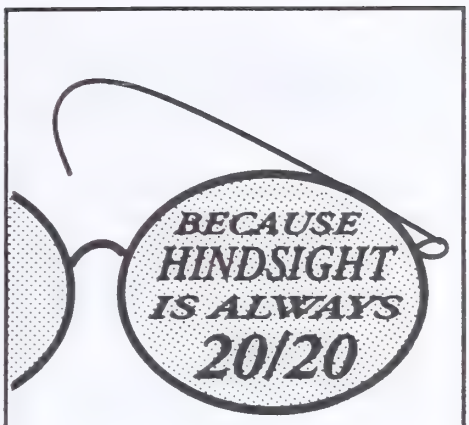
Some of the gems this year suggest the scope of Turin's survey: Takashi Ishi's *Original Sin*, from Japan; Sanou Kollo's *Jigi* (*The Hope*), from Burkina Faso; Clara Law's *Autumn Moon*, from Hong Kong; and Veit Helmer's short film *Within Grasp*, from Germany (probably the best work in the entire festival). Few features find Italian distributors at Turin because the November festival dates follow those of the other chief venues for independent films.

Since 1986, an average of five U.S. independent features have played each year, including Jim Jarmusch's *Down by Law*, Maggie Greenwald's *Home Remedy* and *The Kill Off*, Michael Lehmann's *Heathers*, Alex Cox's *Walker*, Gregg Araki's *Three Bewildered People in the Night*, St. Clair Bourne's *Making "Do the Right Thing,"* and John Sayles' *Eight Men Out* and *City of Hope*. Alexandre Rockwell, John McNaughton, Lehmann, Matthew Patrick, and Everett Lewis, among others, have brought their films to Turin.



Courtesy Festival Internazionale Cinema Giovani

Nevertheless, Barbera admits that U.S. independents are underrepresented at the fest, citing as the primary reason different cultural perspectives



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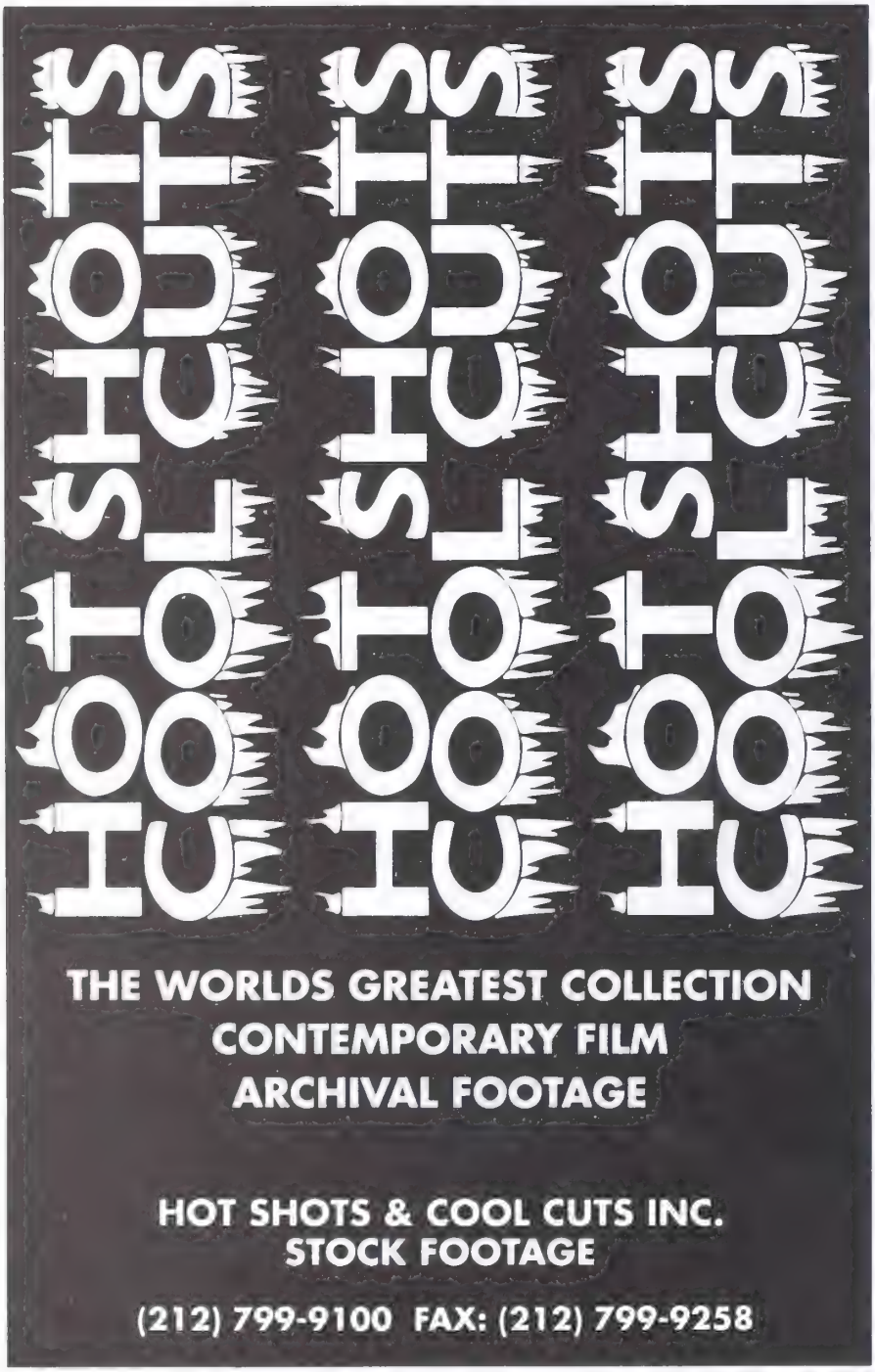
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and the inability to see all of the independent work from this country. (Inadequate scouting is another one he is too kind to state.) This year Araki's *The Living End* was perhaps the most interesting of the works by U.S. independents (along with a Hal Hartley retrospective), but it was offset by such conventional American Film Institute fare as William Chartoff's *Colored Balloons* and Steven Shainberg's *The Prom* and such uninspired pseudo-narratives as Temistocles Lopez's roundelay, *Chain of Desire*. Emanuela Martini's tribute to 1960s American independent cinema—low-budget gore and camp by the likes of Herk Harvey, Russ Meyer, Hershell Gordon Lewis, William Asher, and Brian DePalma—was, however, a knockout.

The biggest problem the festival faces, however, is finding appropriate features from the host country. Most Italian directors want to present their works at the Venice International Film Festival in September, so those who are rejected by Venice miss the deadline for Turin and other Italian festivals. Adds Barbera, echoing much of the sentiment expressed these days among cineastes in Italy, "There are only a couple of good Italian films every year."

Festival Internazionale Cinema Giovani, Piazza San Carlo, 161 10123 Torino, Italia; tel: 39 (0)11 5623309; fax: 39 (0)11 5629796.

HOWARD FEINSTEIN

Howard Feinstein is a freelance film journalist living in New York.

AIVF REGIONAL CORRESPONDENTS

AIVF has a network of regional correspondents who can provide membership information and aid recruitment in areas of the country outside New York. AIVF members are urged to contact them about AIVF-related needs and problems, your activities, and other relevant information and news:

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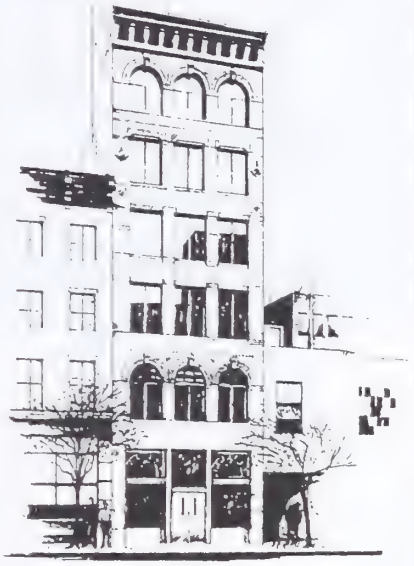
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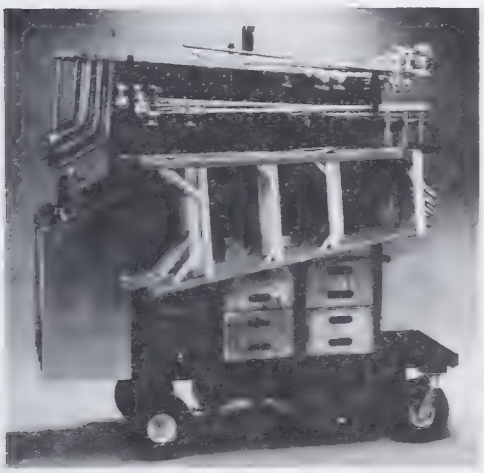
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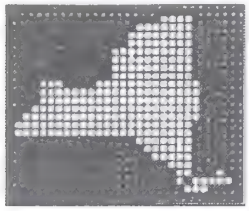
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IN DIRE STRAITS

Downsized by Half, the New York State Council on the Arts Restructures

LUCINDA FURLONG



Since 1989, when it reached a $54.8-million peak, the New York State Council on the Arts (NYSCA) has lost 50 percent of its budget. As a result, its staff has been cut by a third, site visits outside New York City are now almost impossible, funding awards have been reduced, and some program categories have been suspended while others, such as film and video production, face alternate year funding.

In January Governor Mario Cuomo submitted his budget proposal for fiscal year 1993-94, but this contained no hint of light at the end of the tunnel. Cuomo recommended another 13 percent cut for the agency, bringing its budget down to $24.6-million. While the state legislature may restore a portion of the cut during the spring budget negotiations, as it has in the past, some kind of reduction is probable.

One controversial step is the Regional Partnership Plan, in which NYSCA funds will be allocated for regional regrant programs.

Given its dire financial straits, top personnel at NYSCA are looking for ways to save money beyond whittling away at individual line items. More fundamental structural changes are moving off the drawing board and into practice. These include a new decentralization plan now being tested in three areas of New York State and a three-project limit per organizational grant applicant, introduced a year ago. Whether these will suffice to save NYSCA—once considered an innovator and exemplar for arts funding agencies—or whether they will mark the end of an era will become evident soon enough.

The 3-project limit

Anticipating the need for coping strategies, NYSCA formed an official Planning Committee in 1991. One of its first recommendations was to impose a three-project limit on all organizations applying for funding (with an additional request permitted to the Arts-in-Education program).

The three-project limit, implemented in March 1992, has achieved its desired effect of reducing the number of grant applications. But the cost to media is dear. Over 50 multi-arts centers and local arts councils have curtailed or eliminated their film and media programs. Particularly hard hit are upstate organizations. Forced to choose among program categories, these groups have had to forego the possibility of continued funding from the Electronic Media and Film (EMF) program in favor of other organizational priorities. Some have had longstanding exhibition and screening programs, including the Donnell Media Center of the New York Public Library, Dance Theater Workshop, the Islip Town Art Museum, and the Afrikan Poetry Theater in Jamaica, Queens. Others present programs in areas that have had little exposure to the independent media arts, such as the Olean Public Library, the Upper Catskill Community Art Center, and the Rome Art and Community Center.

EMF director Deborah Silverfine has attempted to maintain some level of support for these upstate and underserved communities by establishing a film and video rental regrant program. Organizations that have hit their three-project limit can still apply for funds for film and videotape programming through the Experimental Television Center in Owego.

Silverfine has also created a two-year technical assistance pilot project with funds from the National Endowment for the Arts' State Arts Agencies initiative. The fund, which will be administered through Cornell Cinema, will support technical assistance for the exhibition of film and electronic media by rural and minority-run organizations.

The Regional Partnership Plan

NYSCA's long-term survival strategy involves devising ways to develop new funding partnerships and increase visibility for NYSCA-funded activities. As part of its new PR effort, NYSCA is considering "your-tax-dollars-at-work" signs, similar to those seen at highway construction sites, posted at public arts events. In addition, Silverfine and Linda Earle, who now heads both the Individual Artists' and Museum Aid programs, are organizing a statewide touring program celebrating 25 years of NYSCA-funded films and videotapes.

A more controversial step is the Regional Partnership Plan. This Planning Committee recommendation was put into effect last summer as a pilot program in three regions of the state: the Catskills, Western New York, and the Bronx.

Representatives from arts organizations in these areas were called to a meeting in July to discuss the possibility of a new, locally-based funding structure. According to the plan, NYSCA funds will be allocated for regional regrant programs

Arts advocates believe NYSCA has fallen victim to Cuomo's continuing feud with the Republican leadership--in particular, his personal animosity toward State Senator Roy Goodman, chair of the Senate arts committee.

and their administrative costs. However, the precise details of the pilot remain vague, primarily because NYSCA executive director Mary Hays and the Council, NYSCA's governing board, have invited each region to work with them on devising their own implementation plans. Each plan would be subject to NYSCA approval.

As Hays explained in a memo to constituents last August, the purpose of the pilot program is to "broaden the understanding and support" for NYSCA-funded activities "by approaching the distribution of [NYSCA's] ongoing support through a partnership involving all the local arts groups." Calling the pilot part of a long-term strategy for an era of diminished funding, Hays hopes it will accomplish two goals: garner support for the arts not only from state legislators, but from corporations and other entities, and reduce the costs of its current centralized funding structure. "There is a real developmental aspect to it," she told *The Independent*. "With less resources, we can't be as centralized. We're attempting to see if we can create a cooperative approach to localities. The partnership is mutually developed."

Each of the three regions has responded with varying degrees of enthusiasm. The Bronx, under the leadership of the Bronx Arts Council, has already established a regrant mechanism and held an application workshop in January. In Western New York, however, discussions over the pilot have stalled. According to one Buffalo arts administrator, "There is a great deal of suspicion among the various groups [toward one another], which makes it hard for them to organize around something as loaded as NYSCA funding."

Meanwhile in the Catskill region, arts groups, fearful that the pilot would pit them against each other, began with the feeling, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." This sentiment was eventually set aside and a two-phase plan developed. According to Pamela Cooley, director of the Upper Catskill Council on the Arts and one of the plan's authors, first an office will be established to serve as a communications and technical assistance arm which will help the arts community interface with business, political, educational, and social service agencies, and the general public. "It's a way to give the arts a foundation in the community with as much clout as these other sectors," Cooley explains. After a one-year trial period, the group will evaluate the office's effectiveness and decide if it wants to proceed with developing a regrant structure. According to Cooley, "My feeling is that we'll be able to do what we want to do without going to regranting."

A wary response

While sympathetic to the agency's plight, many arts advocates are confused by the plan's vagueness and wary of the implications of locally organized panels. At present, it is not clear whether these decentralized panels would review work by discipline, as is now the case at NYSCA, or whether a single local panel would compare dance applicants with video artists, museum exhibition programs, etc.

An equally thorny issue centers around which grant applications would be handled locally and which would go to NYSCA. According to Hays, all project support applications—i.e. film/videomakers and other artists, plus organizations seeking funds for discrete projects—would be evaluated by NYSCA panels. Also, applications from organizations deemed by NYSCA to be "primary" would continue to be reviewed by peer panels selected by NYSCA program staff. Primary organizations are defined by NYSCA as "eligible arts organizations which, by the quality of their arts services, or by the importance of their contributions to a significant population or the arts discipline in which they specialize, are particularly important to the cultural life of New York State...." By law, 50 percent of NYSCA's program budget must be allocated to these groups. But all "non-primary" organizations seeking general operating support would have to apply to the designated regional entity.

And therein lies the problem: if panels are drawn locally, what's to prevent conflict of interest? How can expertise in each discipline be assured? Is there a large enough pool of panelists in each region to evaluate the different disciplines free of conflict? And will the panels even be discipline-based? This is particularly a problem in regions lacking constituents with expertise in the media arts field.

In a letter to Hays and the Council last January, the New York City Arts Coalition, an advocacy group, pointed out that regional funding panels would effectively result in a two-tier hierarchy, creating the "perception that local panels are not quite as 'expert' as NYSCA panels, especially since applications from primary organizations are to remain with NYSCA for evaluation." The coalition also questioned how such a funding structure might work in New York City, where it could



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degenerate into a patronage system.

The coalition urged Hays and the Council to reconsider the pilot, saying it was "based on flawed premises and does not provide solutions to the real problems facing the arts in New York State." The coalition questioned whether the pilot would actually save money, since it will in effect introduce another administrative layer to the funding process.

While acknowledging that it may not save money, Hays argues that it will strengthen each region's cultural identity and improve their ability to fundraise locally. Both Hays and deputy director Barbara Haspiel emphasize that the pilot is an experiment, subject to revision or outright cancellation. Hays pointed out that, no matter what the outcome, the process has already had a "rejuvenating effect" on demoralized Council members and staff. According to Haspiel, the pilot is part of a larger outreach effort, which also involves Council members traveling around the state at their own expense to develop closer ties to the various regions. As Haspiel put it, "If it doesn't work, it doesn't mean it's a failure."

The coalition's letter listed one further criticism: While agreeing that increased local input is a worthy goal, they said there is no evidence to support the assumption that giving localities decision-making power over local grants will garner more support in Albany. They argued that the "lack of political support for NYSCA lies not with the legislative branch, but with the executive."

Hays responds that, "Until the economy improves or there is more interest from the executive branch," NYSCA must change the way it awards grants. "We can't sit here in this shrunken state and hope that five years from now someone will think [NYSCA] should be expanded."

The Cuomo curse

Commissioned in 1960 as a temporary state agency and established in 1965 as a permanent agency, NYSCA is the oldest public arts agency in the country, and it remains the largest state arts council. More important, it is recognized as a national leader in arts funding. NYSCA's peer panel process, now widely used by both public and private funders, was the model in 1965 for the newly created National Endowment for the Arts. NYSCA is arguably the single most important catalyst for the development of the independent media arts as a "field." In 1967, it was the first state arts council to recognize independent film as a creative endeavor worthy of public funding. It was considered at the cutting edge when it initiated funding for video and audio/radio in 1971.

Under Governor Cuomo, NYSCA received modest increases throughout the 1980s. But after the 1987 Wall Street crash, the state slid into a crippling recession. Since 1990, Cuomo has steadily decreased NYSCA's budget, with the most bruising blow in 1992, when the agency was cut from roughly $50-million to $28-million. Legislators argue these are austere times. But, as arts

advocates repeatedly point out, NYSCA has sustained proportionally far deeper cuts than any other state agency. Many suggest political factors are also at work.

Indeed, NYSCA's pummeling at the hands of Cuomo is puzzling given the Democrats' traditional support for the arts nationally. But while the NEA was a product of Lyndon Johnson's Great Society, NYSCA is the child of a Republican, Nelson Rockefeller, and the agency's strongest support has always come from the Republican-controlled State Senate. Arts advocates believe that NYSCA has fallen victim to Cuomo's continuing feud with the Republican leadership—in particular, his personal animosity toward State Senator Roy Goodman. Goodman is chair of the Senate Special Committee on the Arts and Cultural Affairs, which recommends funding levels for NYSCA.

A year ago Goodman's committee recommended a freeze for the agency, arguing that it had already taken big hits the previous three years. Again this year, according to Robert Russell, Albany director of the Senate arts committee, Goodman will ask that its current budget of $27.5-million be maintained. He and other NYSCA supporters in the Legislature justify their position by pointing out that Cuomo has called for a $4-million increase in the state's budget for its "I Love New York" campaign. Still, even if successful, NYSCA's budget would be roughly the level it was in 1976.

This year's proposed 13-percent cut was less than anticipated. But Cuomo's continued assault on the agency is likely to continue, and many wonder how long NYSCA can withstand its de facto dismantling before irreparable damage is done to New York's status as a national arts leader.

Lucinda Furlong is a curator and critic living in Brooklyn.

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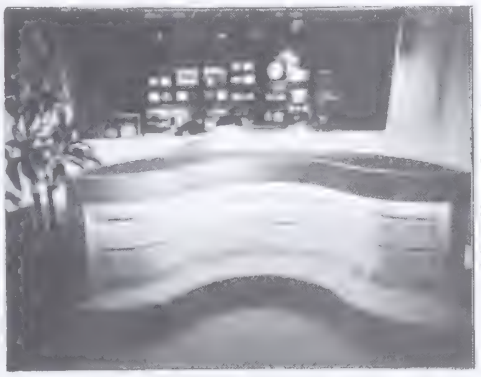
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Rising from the Ruins

Local TV helps define a new Kurdish identity



LAURA DAVIDSON

WITH PHOTOGRAPHS BY SUSAN MEISELAS

UNDER THE COVER OF ALLIED AIRPLANES AND THE SILENCE OF THE Western media, the Kurds in Northern Iraq have hijacked the Iraqi broadcasting system and set up their own television networks. Since the end of the Gulf War and the establishment of a "safe haven" in Northern Iraq by the Allied Forces, the Kurds in Iraqi Kurdistan have elected a parliament, unified the army, and established a shared presidency. And while the Kurds have officially declared Kurdistan a part of a larger federated Iraq rather than an independent state, Iraqi Kurdistan remains the center of the Iraqi opposition and a politically autonomous zone. In this critical period of self-government, television stations are playing an important role in defining and maintaining a Kurdish identity, an identity separate from the rest of Iraq.

The Kurds have built up approximately 12 television stations from virtually nothing. Using second-hand VHS cameras, pairs of VHS players for editing decks, and a great deal of ingenuity, the Kurds are producing and broadcasting an impressive variety of programs, including local news hours, public health programs, cultural panels, and political satires. These in-station productions are complemented by a wide range of foreign films and children's programming translated into Kurdish.

Kurdish news production, a creative montage of international broadcasts and local reports, is one example of how the Kurds are combining modern technology and meager resources. International news stories from Cable Network News, Britain's ITV, and the British Broadcasting Corporation are captured on satellite and translated into Kurdish. Images from these

larger networks are then mixed with Kurdish news reports written and read by local reporters. Most of these reporters are young Kurdish women from the larger, more liberal Kurdish cities, women who wear Western clothes and make-up. By featuring women newsreporters in a generally conservative society, Kurdish television stations are making a bold statement about the future position of women in Kurdistan. Though Kurdish women are not obliged to wear veils, their conduct is strictly regulated by cultural codes. And though the scope of a woman's freedom varies greatly from household to household based on class, education, and family tradition, Kurdish women must always remain aware of their reputations. That Kurdish women are now represented and respected as professional women on Kurdish television must have a significant impact on how young women in Kurdistan view what is acceptable behavior and might have lasting implications on what it means to be a Kurdish woman in Kurdish society.

At the same time that Kurdish television takes the lead in representing changing roles in Kurdish society, it also looks to the past for inspiration. One of the most dynamic media forms on television is the Kurdish music video which integrates traditional Kurdish music and dances with views of the spectacular Kurdish landscape. While these videos show Kurds rejoicing at finally being free in their own land, they also include images of Kurdish *peshmerga* (guerrilla fighters, literally "those who face death") who fought in the mountains for a free Kurdistan. Behind Kurdish musicians, the faces of martyred *peshmerga* appear superimposed over the rugged mountain landscapes, reminding Kurdish viewers that the present tenuous state of independence in Kurdistan has only been achieved through the sacrifices these men made in the past.



The most popular programs at present, however, are the comedy shows that critique the difficult situation in Kurdistan today: *Zoom Zoom* and *Kashcol*. These shows grapple with the everyday problems of contemporary Kurdistan: the economic embargoes imposed by the UN and Iraq, the black market, and the uneasy visits of Kurds who have been living in Europe or the United States. Sherzad,* one of the comedians in *Zoom Zoom*, says he gets many of the ideas for the skits from his audience. "At the beginning, the first three shows, we tried to prepare the programs. But later,...people started sending their problems to us, and we began depending on the problems of the people." In one skit, a Kurd living in Sweden returns to his hometown in Kurdistan. Carrying an expensive new camera, sporting Western hiking shorts and long blond hair, and taking pictures of tree limbs, he acts as if he has been dropped on some exotic planet for the first time. Approached by a close relative, he pretends he does not recognize him, can no longer speak Kurdish, and does not want to be bothered by family obligations. After some initial bantering, his cousin removes his blond wig, forces him to defend himself in Kurdish, and reminds him that he is still a Kurd. As many young Kurds go to Europe to study and few return to Kurdistan, the "European Kurd" is a recognized issue within Kurdish society. By voicing a common frustration on television, the community admits a

* As Saddam Hussein is still in power in Iraq, only first names will be used in this article to protect the identities of those people interviewed.

A mass grave in a former Iraqi military base outside of Sulaimania.

Photos pp. 24-28 courtesy Susan Meiselas/Magnum Photos, ©1992



problem while laughing at it at the same time.

Similarly, *Zoom Zoom* features a skit about Saddam Hussein every week. As long as Hussein is still alive and well in Baghdad, these comedies allow people to laugh at what remains a real threat while controlling how that threat is represented. Saddam is shown in forward and backward motion so that he appears to be performing a Kurdish dance in one skit, synchronized swimming routines in another. As Sherzad proudly boasts of *Zoom Zoom*, "Everyone is watching it, especially the Kurdish government. And when we show it, the next day there will be a copy seen in Baghdad also." With the Iraqi army performing maneuvers only five miles from the television station in Arbil, even producing a comedy show becomes an act of grave risk in Iraqi Kurdistan.

The subversive use of video, however, is not new to the Iraqi Kurds. Saddam Hussein was always aware of the power of images, and under his Baath party regime the television was Hussein's official forum. Even in remote villages, Hussein gave television sets as gifts or made them available at very low prices so that he might broadcast his policies throughout Iraq and Iraqi Kurdistan. In villages throughout Kurdistan, the *peshmerga* used alternative screenings to challenge Hussein's claim to represent what was happening in Kurdistan. Abas, the head cameraman for one of the two largest political parties in Iraqi Kurdistan, the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK), and currently the director of the main PUK television station in Sulaimaniya, was a cameraman in the mountains throughout the 1980s. During the guerrilla war against the Baath regime, he travelled with the *peshmerga* to document the fighting and took the videos to the small villages to show the local villagers. There, with captured generators running the televisions, the *peshmerga* screened the videos in mosques or village gardens so the whole village could gather to watch. In this way, the PUK used video as a tool to gain the trust of the villagers so that they would believe the *peshmerga* over the government and aid them in their war against the Iraqi army.

These videos were also used as powerful evidence of the atrocities of the Hussein regime, evidence which was broadcast throughout the world. After Iraq's gas attack of Halabja in 1988 (which Saddam Hussein vehemently denied), Abas videotaped the city and smuggled the videotapes to Europe. These tapes were widely broadcast on European news stations and constitute a large portion of Gwynne Robert's BBC film *Winds of Death*. It was because of these videotapes and similar images made by journalists that international attention was first brought to the Kurdish situation, and the illegal actions of the Iraqi regime were finally admitted by the international community.

Ironically, Hussein also made images of his own crimes. Among the 13 tons of Iraqi intelligence documents captured by the PUK in Iraqi Kurdistan, the PUK found a number of Iraqi military videotapes. These tapes systematically document the torture and execution of the Kurds. Hussein, too, valued the image as document, but he intended to control the circulation of those images. Now that these videotapes are in the hands of the PUK and international human rights organizations, they will have a different use. They will be used as evidence in a genocide case against the Hussein regime which Human Rights Watch is preparing to bring before the International Court of Justice in the Hague.

While it is the Kurds and not the Baath regime who now control the images that circulate within Iraqi Kurdistan, the Kurds do not have control over the images seen by the rest of the world. And while the Kurds are generating representations of themselves for themselves, they have little input as to how they are represented by the West. Since events in Kurdistan have not been covered by most of the news services in recent months, due to crises in other parts of the world, the Kurds hope that they will soon be



Human rights officials and a Kurdish teacher released from Iraqi prison watch a video of his torture, filmed by the Iraqi military.

able to send out the footage they are making in Kurdistan to Western news services so that their situation will continue to receive international attention. The Kurds have received some training in newsreporting and have been able to purchase minimal equipment from outside sources.* What remains to be seen is whether this footage will be accepted by international news organizations as objective reportage or whether it will be considered propaganda for the Kurdish cause and rejected.

After living under the totalitarian regime of Saddam Hussein, it is

*The media centers still need editing decks, mixing equipment, and other technological support. Equipment donations or monetary support may be sent to Kurdistan via the Kurdish representative in Washington c/o Barham Salih, 4112 Wynwood Dr., Annandale, VA 22003.



A defaced mural of Saddam Hussein on the wall of a military base where Kurdish refugees now live.



Having built their TV stations from virtually nothing, the Kurds mix and edit all programming on VHS decks like this one at the PUK TV in Sulaimania.

difficult for many Kurds to believe that there is hope for this small federation to survive. And while there is an operating parliament in Kurdistan, jobs are scarce due to the heavy economic embargo and the precarious political situation. To see the Kurdish Parliament on television, to hear Kurdish used as the official language, and to watch the news presented by Kurds helps Kurdish viewers to believe that Kurdistan is real. Everyday the Kurdistan that many people only dreamed about is being represented, contested, and created before and by a Kurdish audience.

This article grew out of research for In the Shadow of History: Kurdistan, *a pictorial history of the Kurds to be published by Random House in 1994. Susan Meiselas, a MacArthur fellow who has spent a decade photographing in Latin America, is the book's project director and Laura Davidson, a writer living in New York City, is collaborating on the research for the book.*

The situation in Kurdistan today has its parallel in the 1920s, when the Kurds were promised independence in the Treaty of Sevres. Then, as today, Kurdish photographers considered it important to represent their leaders and culture. This photograph of Sheik Mahmud, the Kurdish leader who fought for independence in the 1920s, was taken by a local Kurdish photographer.

Courtesy Studio Rafiq, Sulaimania



Technology in Transition

From video dialtone to DBS—where do independents fit in?

JEFFREY CHESTER AND KATHRYN MONTGOMERY

THE AMERICAN MEDIA SYSTEM IS IN THE MIDST OF TUMULTUOUS CHANGE. New communications technologies, from fiber optics to video compression to high definition TV, are dramatically altering the traditional forms of production, distribution, and reception. The convergence of video, voice, data, and text will produce an entirely new "multimedia" system, with hundreds of interactive channels coming into the home through a single wire.

This technological innovation has triggered a power struggle of unprecedented proportions. The country's giant communications industries (broadcasting, cable, telephone, and newspaper) are locked in battle over which will control telecommunications in the 21st century. They have unleashed an arsenal of political weapons to influence policymakers and lay their respective claims on the future communications infrastructure.

While the full transformation of American media may take well over a decade, government policies are rapidly moving forward to set rules in place for control, access, and use of the next telecommunications delivery system. For example, the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) took the following actions only in the last year:

- created a comprehensive "Video Dialtone" policy to allow telephone companies (telcos) to enter the television business;
- allowed mergers between broadcast networks and cable companies;
- approved a plan to give every existing TV station a separate channel for broadcasting in high definition television (HDTV).

Ironically, even as public battles are waged in the press and in Congress, there is an underlying movement toward further consolidation both within and among the communications industries. Some of the largest cable, telephone, newspaper, computer, and broadcast companies have already begun launching a series of joint ventures and strategic alliances. Experts predict that these alliances will resolve the current conflicts among competing industries in a few years.

These developments will have a significant impact on the future of independent video and filmmaking. Depending on the outcome, independents would either have new opportunities for access and funding or find themselves pushed further to the edges of the electronic media system.

Promise & Threat

If the right choices are made within the next few years, we could see a significant improvement in our media system. The combination of expanded channels, affordable production, and interactive capability could:

- create an infrastructure for vital community services
- provide new outlets for cultural expression
- stimulate local and national economic development
- open the media to a wider range of voices
- offer citizens new opportunities for participating in government.

However, if we turn our backs and allow the media industries to control the debate, we are likely to see:

- prohibitive access charges that will make it extremely difficult for nonprofits and small independent producers to gain entry to the system
- programming menus in which independent offerings are easily buried beneath more visible and prominent commercial video services
- a sharp reduction in government funding for independents, as most of the public funds funneled through the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and Public Broadcasting Service are diverted to educational services
- high monthly fees that will make essential services and information unaffordable to a large proportion of Americans.

In addition, we will lose certain fundamental features of our current media system, which we now take for granted:

- **Free over-the-air broadcast television** will most likely disappear as cable and fiber optic systems become the primary means of distribution. Although certain basic services may be available for a flat monthly fee, most programming in the future, including news, sports, public affairs and documentaries, may be offered only as pay-per-view or even pay-per-minute.
- **Public, educational, and governmental access** channels and other local services on cable television could vanish as phone companies replace cable companies. Phone companies are not required to go through the franchising process to begin operations.
- **Public television** could be drastically cut back or even eliminated. Current political developments do not bode well for publicly supported media. Right-wing groups have launched an attack on public television, arguing that it misuses tax dollars and is no longer necessary because of program duplication on cable channels.

The current stalemate among the major corporate interests has created a

This article is excerpted from "Media in Transition: Independents and the Future of Television," a report published by National Video Resources in November 1992. The report includes additional information on cable and public television, a resource list, and specific recommendations for action that independents can take to affect telecommunications policy. Copies of the full report are available from: NVR, 73 Spring St, New York, NY 10012.

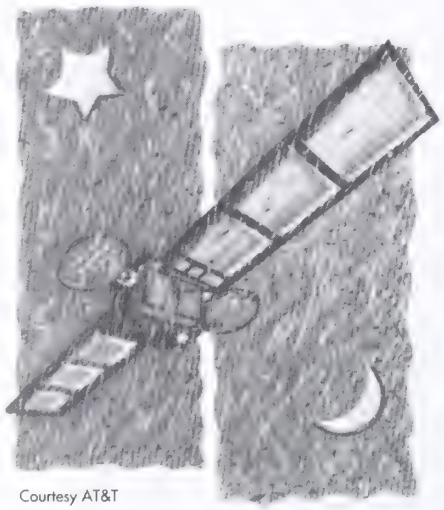
unique opportunity—a narrow "window of necessity"—to assert the public interest, reframe the debate in terms of democratic and social consequences, and involve legislators and the public in deciding the key questions of public policy. This short-lived opportunity will last no longer than five years. If independents act now, they could play a key role in that process. The independent community must join with other nonprofit and public interest groups to create a broad-based movement that promotes a new public interest vision for telecommunications in the 21st century.

Fiber Optics: The Superhighway of the 21st Century

Experts predict that fiber technology will become the communications "superhighway of the 21st century," supplanting both cable and over-the-air broadcasting as the primary conduit not only for video, but also for voice, data, and graphics. Composed of hair-size strands of glass that use light to transmit information, fiber has a much greater transmission capacity than either copper or coaxial cable and permits interactive two-way communications.

Communications industry analysts see fiber optic technology as a way to create a cornucopia of new market ventures that could dramatically change the way people watch television. Through video on demand, consumers could order individual programs, selecting them from electronic menus. The concept of network programming schedules would become outdated and the home video rental industry would disappear.

Because of the costs, it will probably be many years before every U.S. household is connected to a nationwide system of seamless, interactive fiber optic networks. In the meantime, a number of telephone and cable companies have already begun to replace parts of their systems with fiber optic technology.



Courtesy AT&T

Policy Developments

Policy proposals for accelerated deployment of fiber optic technology are under consideration at the FCC, at the White House, and in Congress, pushed by the Regional Bell Operating Companies, also called RBOCs or Baby Bells. They are joined in their current efforts by other local phone service providers, which were not part of the original Bell System. Until recently, these companies were barred from delivering information or video services in areas where they provided telephone services. In 1991, after years of legal challenges, the courts lifted the restrictions on information delivery. However, the 1984 Cable Act still does not permit a telephone company to "provide video programming directly to subscribers in its telephone service area."

The phone companies have launched a massive lobbying and public relations campaign to remove all remaining restrictions against entry into the television business. Their ultimate goal is to become the nation's primary electronic communications delivery system. The telephone companies are asking policymakers not only to repeal the restrictive provisions of the Cable Act, but also to give them special financial incentives in exchange for building a nationwide fiber-optic system within the next two decades.

The cable and newspaper industries, as well as AT&T, MCI, and other long-distance carriers, oppose telco entry and are seeking federal legislation to reverse the most recent court decisions. The newspaper industry fears that phone company plans to offer classified advertising and electronic Yellow Pages could force many papers out of business.

The fight over this issue is one of the biggest and most expensive lobbying battles in many years. Except for some interventions by Consumer Federation of America (primarily around telephone rate issues), the major communications industries have dominated the process. The current proposals to permit phone companies to build fiber optic delivery systems are based on a common carrier model. Common carrier means that anyone who wants to use the communications system may do so on a first-come, first-serve basis; the company that owns the distribution facilities is not permitted to control the content. Telephone service is common carrier, broadcast and cable are not. A television system based on a common carrier model would be potentially more open and diverse than the present TV delivery system. Program providers would be able to distribute their programming without having to appeal to the media gatekeepers at broadcast or cable companies.

While the telephone companies support the concept of a common carrier-based fiber optic network, they are also pushing for policies that would allow them to produce and distribute their own programming, an issue that has generated considerable controversy. Phone companies argue that they need revenue from programming as an incentive to build the fiber networks and to help defray the costs of construction. Those opposed argue that control of both "conduit and content" could give the telephone companies unprecedented and dangerous powers. There is particular concern that the telephone companies, as the managers of the network, could favor their own programming ventures by cross-subsidizing production costs with profits from local telephone services.

Legislative Initiatives

In June 1991, Senator Conrad Burns (R-MT) and then-Senator Albert Gore (D-TN) cosponsored the Communications Competitiveness and Infrastructure Modernization Act of 1991 (S.1200). A new version of the bill will be introduced this year. The original legislation requires the construction of a nationwide broadband fiber optic network by 2015. The bill would also give telephone companies the right to program one-fourth of all the channels. The remaining channels would be available to other program providers. The Bush Administration strongly endorsed this legislation. President Clinton is also supportive of building a fiber optic network to everyone's home by 2015 [see sidebar page 32].

Video Dialtone

In the meantime, the FCC has moved forward with its own plan for telephone company entry into television. In July 1992, the commission approved a new video dialtone policy that allows telephone companies to deliver video programming in their own service areas. Because the decision does not permit phone companies to program these new networks, the commission maintains that the new policy does not conflict with the restrictions of the Cable Act.

With video dialtone, telephone companies would continue to function as common carriers, linking viewers to various programming and service providers. These programmers would pay a set fee to the phone companies but would establish their own charges to viewers.

Using video gateways or electronic menus, viewers would select what they wanted to see and be charged accordingly. The rates for each service or program would vary. Some would be pay-per-view, some would be available at monthly rates, and some would be advertiser-supported with no additional cost to viewers. It is also likely that charges for watching TV programs could be similar to those for long distance telephone service. As *Daily Variety* explained about the future of video dialtone service: "Viewers wishing to watch the Paramount Network could tap into the channel and be billed on a per-minute basis."

The FCC plan calls for two levels of service. The first would list all programs and services in the menu, similar to listings in the white pages of the phone book. The second, which would cost more, would allow consumers access to more powerful computer-assisted services. For a regulated fee, all programmers would be given access to the first level, which would function as a common carrier. Access to the second level, however, would be determined by the marketplace and costs would be significantly higher.

The FCC has agreed to let telephone companies participate in a very limited way in programming ventures. The video dialtone ruling allows them to purchase up to 5 percent of video programming companies, such as Hollywood studios and cable networks. Phone companies will also be permitted to provide financial assistance to programmers in the form of loans, as long as they do not acquire controlling interest in those companies. In addition, phone companies can now jointly build and share network facilities with cable operators.

Because they are common carriers, the phone companies will not be required to secure franchises from local municipalities or pay franchise fees as cable systems must. This decision, made by the FCC last fall, has generated considerable criticism from the cable industry, public access producers, and local governments. Both the National Cable Television Association (NCTA) and the National Association of Telecommunications Officers and Advisers (NATOA) have appealed the ruling.

Additional appeals are expected to be filed to challenge the July video dialtone ruling. The final decision about telephone company entry into the television business will ultimately be made in the courts and in Congress.

The communications system is at a crossroads. Decisions made during the next few years will determine the shape of telecommunications in the 21st century.

Issues

The developments surrounding fiber optics and telco entry raise a number of issues of vital interest to independents, nonprofits, and consumers:

• **Media Consolidation.** One of the commission's key arguments in support of video dialtone is that phone companies will provide effective competition to the monopolistic cable industry. However, given the economics of wire delivery systems, it is unlikely that two companies will be able to operate successfully in the same community. If the telephone companies succeed in convincing Congress to authorize the construction of a national fiber network, this new network could ultimately supplant cable. Through joint ventures and other cooperative arrangements, cable and phone companies will develop partnerships for the production and delivery of video programming. This trend toward further consolidation could eventually create new monopoly providers of TV services.

• **Access.** An advanced fiber network may have the capacity to deliver 500 or more channels to the home, a sharp contrast to the limited channel capacity of broadcast and even cable TV. This could create new opportunities for independents to distribute their work. But the terms of access to the system could still be prohibitive. For example, under the video dialtone proposal, access to the first level would be available to all service providers on a nondiscriminatory basis. But tariffs that are easily paid by commercial service providers could be unaffordable for nonprofits and independent producers. One possible remedy would be to establish special nonprofit tariffs significantly lower than those charged commercial programmers. This policy would be analogous to the tax benefits and lower postage rates established for nonprofits.

• **Community Services.** Since the FCC has eliminated the franchise requirements for telephone companies delivering information and video services, these companies would not be obliged to provide public, educational, or governmental access services to the communities they serve.

• **Visibility.** Independents might also find it difficult to gain attention among the cacophony of voices on the fiber network. Even if all services are listed in the white pages of the electronic menu, the cost of entry to the more sophisticated yellow pages could be prohibitive. These menus may also highlight the well-financed, highly-promoted commercial fare created by the major programming producers.

• **Cost.** Because fiber-optic systems may deliver not only television programming but also telephone, newspaper, magazine, and data services, they could become the only link to essential information—and the costs could be prohibitive for many.

Complete transition to a fiber optic-based communications system will probably not occur for decades. Several new video technologies will have a more immediate impact on television production, distribution, and reception.

High Definition Television

High Definition Television (HDTV) technology dramatically enhances television picture quality by increasing the number of lines of information that make up the picture on a TV screen. Currently, the U.S. broadcasting system is based on the NTSC standard of 525 lines of information, substantially fewer than most foreign systems and far below the number used for high definition. Through the use of digital transmission, HDTV systems will make it possible to converge data and video and will significantly improve sound quality. HDTV will eventually become the standard for all TV transmission: over-the-air, cable, direct broadcast satellites (DBS), and fiber optic.

Currently, five different systems are competing for the U.S. HDTV standard. Once tests are completed, results will be sent to an FCC advisory committee, which will make a final decision in 1993.

The FCC has recently begun a series of decisions about allocation of HDTV frequencies. Under its new plan, all broadcasters will have five years, beginning in 1993, to apply for and build an HDTV station. The FCC argues that giving these channels to broadcasters, instead of making them available to new entrants, will allow for a smooth transition to the HDTV system. The FCC originally proposed that TV stations simulcast programs over both the existing and the new signal until 2008, when the system is completely converted to HDTV.

However, broadcasters lobbied for more flexibility in programming these new channels during the transition period. The commission has tentatively ruled to allow broadcasters four years after going on the air with HDTV before they have to begin simulcasting. Many broadcasters see this

It's the Infrastructure...Stupid

Investment in "infrastructure" is the linchpin of the new Clinton administration's plan to rebuild the U.S. economy. As part of this plan, the White House has placed the construction of high-technology "communications superhighways" at the top of its agenda. Investing in telecommunications, President Clinton argues, will create new jobs, keep America competitive, and provide "information age" advances to such areas as health care and education.

This emphasis on infrastructure has placed telecommunications policy on a fast track. While movement on this issue continues in Congress and at the FCC, the White House is expected to play an unprecedented leadership role in promoting the development of a comprehensive policy. The administration may create a high level commission on communications infrastructure. Many experts predict that Vice President Gore will play a leading role in developing administration policy in this area, given his long-time interest in communications issues. In addition to his work on cable reregulation, Gore has been one of the leading supporters of the national policy for publicy-supported supercomputing networks (better known as the National Research and Education Network, or NREN.)

While no coherent national policy for telecommunications has yet been developed, the Clinton administration is expected to be very supportive of policies designed to accelerate the construction of broadband fiber optic telecommunications networks. The President's economic stimulus program includes a call for government partnerships with the private sector—a position private industry supports.

The electronic media, information, and computer industries have all been heavily lobbying the new administration and Congress with their own proposals for ways in which the federal government can help them develop electronic superhighways and local fiber networks. For example, the Computer Systems Policy Project—an organization composed of the chief executive officers of 13 large computer companies—called on the Clinton administration to make "the creation of a national information infrastructure" a national priority. In a recent press statement, the group's chair, John Sculley of Apple Computer, predicted that "the development of an information infrastructure will raise the standard of living for all Americans and enable our country to prosper in a competitive global economy."

The group urged the federal government to pay for the development of demonstration projects designed to help the various industries construct networks and develop applications. The telephone and cable industries have also expressed a strong interest in receiving federal support for a variety of efforts—from deploying fiber networks to developing educational programming.

All these industries have launched major public relations efforts promising that telecommunications technologies will usher in a new age where Americans have greater choice, personal autonomy, and unlimited access to information. At the same time as they are heralding new public benefits, however, the communications industries are also working to eliminate public interest regulatory obligations. Last fall, Time Warner filed a lawsuit asking that major portions of both the 1984 and 1992 law regulating the cable industry be declared unconstitutional. If the suit is successful, it could have a far-reaching impact—eliminating access channels, rate regulations, and must-carry requirements.

There are openings for input from the public interest community on infrastructure proposals and related issues, such as the reservation of channel capacity for nonprofits, special rates for nonprofit program suppliers, and ongoing mechanisms to support public telecommunications services. The Clinton administration has gone on record as supporting the role of nonprofits in policymaking.

The election of Bill Clinton opens the door for more public- spirited policymaking about the future of the electronic media. But it will be up to the public—including the independent community—to ensure that the telecommunications infrastructure for the next century is more open and democratic than the present one.

JC & KM

as an opportunity to create separate programming on these channels targeted to more upscale audiences, which would generate considerable advertising revenue.

Some policy experts and critics have attacked the FCC's decisions on HDTV, accusing the agency of a giveaway, since these channels would be awarded free, with no evaluation of past performance and no competitive bidding.

Issues

Although many of the crucial allocation decisions appear to have been made already, the controversy over HDTV channel awards may permit the independent community to intervene. Independents may want to file comments of their own with the FCC and work with Congress on ways to involve them more directly in future decisions on HDTV.

If the FCC puts its current plans into effect, most public TV stations will be assigned additional channels for HDTV transmission. It may be possible to negotiate with these stations to develop new programming initiatives involving independents. There may also be opportunities to create a variety of new services, including experimental programs, community information, and other programming not currently available on public TV.

Public television might be open to working with independents, particularly if such an alliance could help them receive federal funding to build HDTV facilities. For example, public television may need to seek financial support from Congress or from the NTIA's Public Telecommunications Facilities Program (PTFP), a federal program that provides grants for public TV and radio equipment. Independents could play a key role in building support for these requests.

Direct Broadcast Satellites

Direct broadcast satellites (DBS) have been on the drawing boards for more than a decade, but only now appear to have reached the point of full implementation. Small receivers, able to pick up signals from a new generation of high-powered satellites, may soon be available at reasonable prices, making this service a potential competitor to cable TV.

Several DBS services are scheduled to begin within the next few years. Minnesota-based Hubbard Broadcasting, in cooperation with Hughes Communications, will launch a satellite in December 1993; service will begin in early 1994. Customers will pay about $700 to purchase the equipment plus a monthly fee to receive a basic package of channels. Additional fees will be charged for pay channels and pay-per-view programs.

Hughes' DIRECTv will offer its own package of sports, concerts, and movies. Special pay-per-view software is being developed to enable consumers to purchase selections conveniently. A new DBS company called SkyPix has announced plans to launch its 80-channel service sometime in 1993; it will offer many different movie titles each day, positioning itself as an alternative to video stores.

Meanwhile, the nation's largest cable companies have developed their own DBS service. Primestar, already operative, is a joint venture of such heavyweights as General Electric, Time Warner, Cox, Telecommunications, Inc., Viacom, and Continental Cable.

Noncommercial DBS

Public television lobbyists have been successful at getting language into cable legislation that requires allocation of some DBS channels for noncommercial programming and services. The 1992 Cable Act says that each DBS service must set aside "not less than four percent nor more than seven percent" of its video channel capacity for "noncommercial public use." However, DBS set-aside requirements may not mean automatic access for independents. It is essential that independents participate in the current FCC rulemaking to implement the law.

As part of its current effort to move more fully into the education market, PBS is planning to begin a new DBS service in late 1993, with the launching of AT&T's Telstar 401. Through compression technology (which reduces the size of the video signal during transmission), PBS officials say they can squeeze enough additional channels out of the system's six transponders to enable the service to carry up to 50 channels of programming, 24 hours a day. PBS plans a test involving 15 public television stations that will allow teachers to receive reference materials and interactive training, and will create a nationwide electronic mail network. The new satellite service may also include special channels dedicated to subjects such as math, science, and adult education.

Issues

DBS could create new opportunities for independents, particularly since Congress approved proposals for noncommercial channel allocations. However, these "set-aside" requirements may not mean automatic access for independents.

There may be some new opportunities for independents in commercial DBS. DBS owners claim that, unlike cable and broadcast TV, their systems can make a profit by narrowcasting to smaller audiences. This could mean that a pay-per-view service for independent programming would succeed if several thousand DBS users pay reasonable fees for such programming. Organizations representing independents might consider approaching such companies as Hughes Communications, Hubbard Communications, or Telecommunications, Inc. (TCI) to develop a distribution arrangement for specialized programming services such as documentaries, lesser known foreign films, or minority programming.

Two-Way TV

In January 1992, the FCC approved a new policy that set the stage for the development of an over-the-air form of two-way television, known as Interactive Video and Data Services (IVDS) or viewer-response TV. The commission recently set aside a portion of the radio spectrum for IVDS use.

TV Answer, the company promoting IVDS, has developed an elaborate marketing plan that would use IVDS primarily as a high-tech sales tool, designed to elicit instant responses from viewers using a gun-like device pointed at their television screens. These devices will transmit the viewer's credit card number automatically. The cost: approximately $700 each.

The Corporation for Public Broadcasting urged the FCC to reserve a portion of the IVDS spectrum allocation "for the providers of noncommercial public service to reach out to the nation's communities with diverse and

dynamic new forms of noncommercial public service communications." However, the FCC refused the request, calling instead on commercial IVDS companies to voluntarily give access to educational service providers.

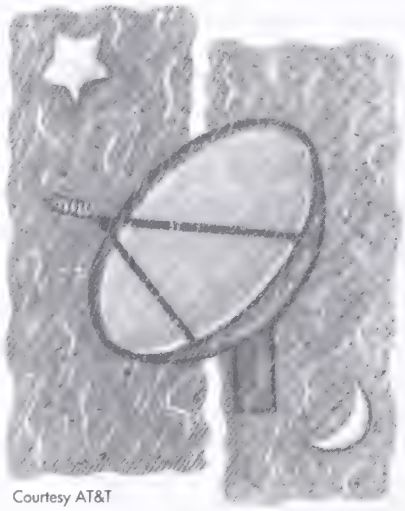
Issues

IVDS is only one of the first of the new generation of interactive communications technologies that will be put in place over the next two decades. It is critically important that these technologies do not serve solely as selling devices. Independents could play a key role in identifying innovative noncommercial uses for interactive television.

Cable's Expanding Channel Capacity

In just over a decade, cable television has become the dominant provider of television programming in the U.S. More than 60 percent of TV viewing homes subscribe to cable television. Once a sleepy mom-and-pop business for improving broadcast TV reception, cable has mushroomed into a $20-billion-a-year industry that feeds dozens of channels to the American public.

The cable industry has been working on ways to increase the number of channels on its systems. A combination of compression and fiber optics will enable cable systems to expand their capacity from a few dozen to several hundred channels.



Courtesy AT&T

Some of the largest cable companies are already test marketing new uses for mega-channel services. The cable industry is particularly eager to expand its systems as a strategy to preempt telephone company entry into the TV business. The industry plans to dedicate most of its expanded channel capacity to:

• Pay-per-view programming, which will become the cable television industry's biggest new moneymaker. The cable industry hopes to transform cable systems into "electronic video stores" that run the most popular Hollywood films over and over on scores of channels. New pay-per-view channels will also be created for special-interest programming.

• Barker channels to promote this pay-per-view programming by continuously running movie trailers and order information. The number of barker channels will significantly expand as pay-per-view channels proliferate.

• Multiplexing, a term borrowed from the theatrical film distribution business, refers to the practice of assigning multiple channels to existing cable networks. For example, HBO will be multiplexed by running the same movies at different times on two or three different channels.

In December 1991, Time Warner unveiled a 150-channel system that uses a fiber optic trunkline in a section of Queens, New York. As "the world's first 150-channel, 2-way interactive system," the Queens experiment is being widely promoted as a liberating new service that will "move the viewer from being a slave to television to being its master."

An upgrade from 75 channels, the Time Warner system is a prototype for future developments in the cable industry. As *Variety* reported, "The Queens system will serve as a laboratory where Time Warner will experiment with the best way to schedule pay-per-view movies and events to harvest the biggest bumper crop of subscriber dollars." Included in the mix of services will be between 50 and 60 pay-per-view movie channels, seven barker channels, and multiplexed HBO and Cinemax channels (both owned by Time Warner).

In a suburb of Denver, Colorado, TCI has joined forces with both AT&T and US West (one of the Baby Bells) to test market an interactive fiber and cable service called Viewer Controlled Cable Television. Movie studios and the A.C. Nielsen Company are also involved in the trial, which will feature a 1,000-title film library as part of the movie-on-demand experiment.

The Denver trial is part of an emerging trend toward strategic alliances among otherwise competing industries. While the cable industry continues its feverish opposition in Washington to telco entry, a number of cable companies are entering into various kinds of partnerships with telephone companies, and with newspapers and movie studios. These arrangements are proving particularly advantageous for developing and marketing various hybrid technologies for video delivery.

Broadcasters have also been heavily involved in these inter-industry arrangements. For example, Capital Cities/ABC and Paramount Pictures recently announced a joint venture to create and distribute pay-per-view programming, which may include specially-made theatrical films. Both Cap Cities and GE/NBC have plans to move into the cable industry, aided by a FCC ruling in June 1992 that changed the rules to allow cable and broadcast network mergers.

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The communications system is at a crossroads. Decisions made during the next few years will determine the shape of telecommunications in the 21st century. Fifteen years ago, the public interest community failed to take effective political action to develop a comprehensive national policy when the cable revolution was underway. Consequently, the community lost the opportunity to shape a new television system that would significantly enhance cultural, educational, and political expression.

Today, the stakes are much higher. The choices made in the next few years will determine not only the future of television, but also the future of our entire print, broadcast, and computer communications system. Unless we formulate and advance a public interest vision, we will repeat the mistakes made in the past, with even more devastating consequences.

Jeffrey Chester and Kathryn C. Montgomery, Ph.D., are codirectors of the Center for Media Education, a Washington, DC-based nonprofit public interest organization that promotes the democratic potential of electronic media. The center educates the public about critical media issues, develops and promotes public interest media policies, and encourges widespread debate in the press about these issues.

LONDON KILLS ME

The London Film Festival

ELLIN STEIN

From its humble beginnings in 1956 with a mere 15 films, the London Film Festival has grown to be Europe's largest noncompetitive festival, sprawling over 17 days at 11 different venues. Along the lines of Toronto's Festival of Festivals, it is oriented towards "giving the London audience a chance to see the best of that year before it disappears," as festival director Sheila Whitaker puts it, rather than toward being an industry insider event where new stars are sighted and deals are struck.



Stacy Cochran opted to attend the London Film Festival rather than the Los Angeles opening of her film *My New Gun*, starring James LeGros and Diane Lane.

Courtesy filmmaker

To make life easier for the would-be cineast, the festival divides its nearly 20 films into assorted categories. There are categories for films from Asia, Africa, Latin America, French films, Italian films, International Frame (a grab bag of everything else that isn't British or American, including films from Scandinavia, Eastern Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Iran, Israel, and all the EC countries besides France and Italy, and this year dominated by the Kaurismaki brothers, Finland's answer to the Coens). There is a video section, an animation section, restorations (which this year included a restored print of Visconti's *The Leopard* unmangled by bad dubbing), Art & Experimental, U.S. independents, and, of course, British cinema. This was all in addition to public interviews with the likes of Alan Rudolph and Nicolas Cage, debates on the influence of television on cinema aesthetics, 26 hours of the second edition of Edgar Reitz's *Heimat*, and a sold-out series of late-night horror films, including Sam Raimi's *The Medieval Dead*, *Hellraiser II*, and the remake of *Night of the Living Dead*. In keeping with its eclectic approach, the festival also incorporated some highly commercial films such as *Sister Act* and *This Is My Life* before their highly commercial releases, although this category also included some films that might easily have gone into the U.S. independents category such as *Reservoir Dogs* (a big festival hit which later went straight into the number one slot on its UK release), *Mistress*, and *The Waterdance*.

The categorization, however, seems somewhat arbitrary. Susan Seidelman's *Confessions of a Suburban Girl* was included under British Cinema, although it is a documentary by an American director about growing up in the American suburbs, because it was commissioned by BBC Scotland. *The Last of His Tribe* came under the U.S. independents heading despite having a British director (Harry Hook), presumably because it was produced by HBO. Other U.S. independent features ranged from the highly idiosyncratic and quirky (e.g., Alexandre Rockwell's *In The Soup*, Gregg Araki's *The Living End*) to nostalgia-tinged documentaries (e.g., Joshua Waletzky's film on Hollywood film score composer Bernard Hermann, Robert Levi's portrait of Duke Ellington), Roots-themed documentaries (Tiana Thi Thanh Nga's *From Hollywood to Hanoi* and Marco Williams' *In Search of Our Fathers*), three short works from British fave rave Hal Hartley, noir (Carl Franklin's *One False Move*), joke noir (Joel Hershman's *Hold Me, Thrill Me, Kiss Me*) and not one but two features starring James LeGros with the word "gun" in the title (Stacy Cochran's *My New Gun* and Tamra Davis' *Guncrazy*).

Contrary to what one might think, London is not the place to make a sale to British television, at least for narrative features. "The London Film Festival is mostly for the public," says Ryan Baxter, who acquires feature films for the BBC. "It's a valuable showcase but not for buyers, and the LFF doesn't pretend that it is. We prefer to meet filmmakers at other festivals because the LFF comes right as we're in the middle of preparing our Christmas film schedule. Berlin is the real market where TV buyers go."

Baxter or someone else from the BBC's acquisitions department cover Berlin, Cannes, the Canadian festivals, the major film markets and, beginning this year, Sundance. "So by the time the LFF comes around we have seen a lot, and it's mostly things we already know about," he explains. Nevertheless, he feels the LFF is a valuable showcase for U.S. filmmakers in that "it helps to build the public profile," while his colleague Lindsay Davis observes that "seeing how a British audience responds to the film gives momentum to a decision already reached."

Likewise, Miranda Dear, Baxter's counterpart at Channel Four, thinks that "there are not many surprises. And you don't really meet filmmakers at the LFF because you're always having to dash back to the office." (Thus filmmakers who hope to meet with an acquisitions executive while in town for the festival should be sure to make contact in advance. Moreover, both the BBC and Channel

Four acquisition departments are subdivided into several different fiefdoms, each with its own resident expert, so one should know into which domain one's film falls before spending a lot of energy wooing the wrong acquisition person.) Nevertheless, Dear finds the LFF useful for catching up with films her colleague has already seen at Sundance and Toronto. Film Four's Jack Lechner, who is in production as opposed to acquisition, also finds the LFF valuable for catching up purposes, describing it as "the *Utne Reader* of film festivals."

Stacy Cochran chose to attend the LFF rather than *My New Gun*'s Los Angeles opening, despite little incentive from a business point of view (the U.K. broadcast rights had already been sold to Channel Four and she had a U.S. distributor, IRS Releasing, to hunt down a U.K. distributor). "If I could have gone to only one more festival after Cannes, it would be London," she says. "The festival couldn't have been run better. It was fun but not manic. Their advertising was good, the staff is as nice as can be, the screenings are in nice theaters, and the audience seems genuinely curious and interested in movies." Not forgetting about business entirely, Cochran took the opportunity to meet with several European producers and "express a personal interest in being part of the European film world. I'd love to make movies in Europe," she says.

Barbara Trent also welcomed the chance to see her film with a British audience. Trent's *The Panama Deception*, made in association with Channel Four, examines the propaganda effort to minimize the effects of the U.S. "intervention" in Panama. "I was curious to know if people like Dan Rather translated as major media figures," she says. (Fortunately, she found U.S. anchormen "come across as dangerously misinforming even to foreign audiences.") In addition, Trent felt the film benefited from the screening because it enabled her to make contact with audience members who offered to help spread the word about the film, essential to a grass roots-dependent effort like *The Panama Deception*. Like many other filmmakers, Trent emphasized how well the staff had treated her and how well-run she thought the festival was. She particularly liked the fact that there was a tent where filmmakers could "drink and eat, meet the press, and pick up mail." Besides a classy bar that served champagne (courtesy of Piper Heidsick, one of the festival's sponsors), the spacious, attractive tent also offered video viewing facilities where buyers and press who couldn't make it to a screening could catch up on what they'd missed. Therefore, the LFF staff strongly advises filmmakers to provide a video preview tape.

For video and experimental work, the LFF offers exposure that would not otherwise be available. "There's never really been the money in Britain to get the work over here," explains Cordelia Swann, who curated the Art & Experimental section, "so the festival's taking this kind of work under its wing has been especially important." For example, the LFF screened new works by Peter Hutton and Holly Fisher, both of whom have rarely shown in Britain (Fisher in particular proved to be a big hit). The experimental filmmakers who come over "are treated like the feature directors and invited to all the lunches and things," Swann says. "They're quite pleased about it."



This year, for the first time, much of the experimental work was shown at the festival's main venue, the South Bank Centre (London's version of New York's Lincoln Center), rather than at the more obscure London Filmmakers Co-op. Video work has been at the South Bank site for two years. Besides granting an imprimatur of respectability, having this work at the heart of the festival encourages a nonspecialist audience to attend. (At a screening of the Wooster Group's *White Homeland Commando* I sat next to actress Patricia Wettig—Nancy on *thirtysomething*—of all people.) Although video still seems to be the neglected stepchild in terms of publicity and general attention paid, the screenings were nevertheless well attended and the programming strong. U.S. works shown included Bill Viola's *The Passing*, Craig Baldwin's *O No Coronado!* and tapes by Jenny Holzer and Teddy Dibble. Newcomers are also welcome; one of the highlights was a very funny less-is-more tape by the wonderfully-named Damaged Californians.

For the experimental section, Swann looks for films that are "exploring things that are not being explored here." This year she felt there was particularly strong work about sexuality, especially by women. In programming the main part of the program, festival director Whitaker looks for "what a film is doing and how well it does it. Production values are irrelevant." The LFF welcomes submissions, but they also actively seek out films that they've seen at other festivals, read about, or learned about from word-of-mouth. Films and tapes have to be UK premieres.

Whitaker believes the festival "should serve all kinds of different audiences." To this end, the festival has, for the past three years, had screenings not only at the highbrow National Film Theater, firmly identified in the public mind with "cinema" as opposed to movies, but also in large first-run theaters in London's West End. They have also established a ticket booth in the thick of things. Besides broadening the festival's audience, Whitaker hopes the West End screenings will "help persuade exhibitors that these smaller movies can play in larger theaters, or a smaller theater in a multiplex." Film Four's Lechner, however, is less sanguine about the effect on exhibitors and distributors of a successful festival screening. "It doesn't make any difference if the audience loves it," he says, "because distributors are too pigheaded. *Slacker* was a big hit at the festival in 1991, and it still took a year for it to find a distributor." It's also hard to argue with the fact that the top box office films in the UK tend to be along the lines of *Basic Instinct*, *Batman Returns*, *Patriot Games*, *Home Alone II*—in other words, the usual suspects.

Still, any independent who comes over here is bound to feel encouraged if only because independent and, to a lesser degree, experimental work is treated as though it matters in and of itself, not just as a stepping stone to bigger and more mainstream (if not better) things. The quality newspapers and London-oriented magazines give a lot of play to interesting movies, not just big ones, and a film like *Gas, Food, and Lodging*, *Swoon*, or *Simple Men* can have a run of six weeks or longer, sometimes even playing more than one theater simultaneously!

The London Film Festival doesn't ignore video and experimental works, like the Wooster Group's *White Homeland Commando.*

Photo: Paula Court, courtesy the Wooster Group

Most remarkably, there is a strong independent presence on television. Channel Four has bought documentaries including *Atomic Cafe*, *Roger and Me*, and Deep Dish's *Hell No, We Won't Go* (all unlikely candidates for primetime screenings on any of the U.S. commercial networks) and is planning an entire season of narrative features by U.S. independents, complete with introductory documentary. Although experimental video work is still underrepresented (though it must be added that the stylistic boundaries of regular television are considerably broader, so perhaps there is less need for it), Channel Four has shown works by Bill Viola and Marlon Riggs. Likewise, films such as *Hollywood to Deadwood*, *Head and Sunlight*, *Common Threads*, *James Baldwin: The Price of the Ticket*, and *Let's Get Lost* have been among the 900 English-language films the BBC programs annually. In the past, says Baxter, less than 10 percent of these have been by U.S. independents, although, he says encouragingly, "There's more of an interest now than in the past. As the mainstream films become more formula-based and commercial and expensive, our market for intelligent narrative films will increase. We can't afford the other kind on the one hand and don't want it on the other."

But before the American independent scampers joyfully off to London, he or she should be aware that there's a bit of a backlash forming. "We're developing a jaundiced view of U.S. independents," says Rod Stoneman, who acquires experimental work for Channel Four. "The problem isn't the quality of the work but the unashamed 'What's in it for me?' attitude of the filmmakers." At the same time, Stoneman realizes this reflects a desperation born of the fact that "the U.S. independents are worse-funded than any place but Latin America." Still, he feels, "there should be more humility about it, a realization that no European independents have access to any American money,"—a point to keep in mind before we go running over to England with our begging bowls out, lest we resemble the French hippies panhandling in India.

Nevertheless, the film- or videomaker who shows in the LFF can be sure of a well-organized screening, a strong publicity effort, a helpful attitude toward arranging interviews, and a welcome sense that the work is reaching audiences outside of the art ghetto. Save the hustle for Berlin, Sundance, or the markets, and come to London for the refreshing feeling of being respected as an *artiste*.

Ellin Stein has written about media issues for the New York Times, *the* Village Voice, *the* Guardian *(UK), and other publications.*

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FROM SOUP TO NUTS (AND BOLTS)

The International Documentary Congress

KAREN KRAMER

More than 750 individuals attended the International Documentary Congress, a first-time event, held in Los Angeles last October 21-23. The International Documentary Association (IDA), which presented this three-day congress along with the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, went out of its way to bring in a wide range of panelists from 17 countries who were diverse in gender, ethnicity, and aesthetic orientation.



"Funding in the American Market" panelists (L-R): Denise Baddour (Discovery), Michael Cascio (A&E), Karen Fuglie (NEH), Donald Marbury (CPB), Mary Jane McKinven (PBS), John Moss (HBO), Vivian Schiller (TBS), John Schott (ITVS), and Andrea Taylor (Ford Foundation).

Courtesy International Documentary Association

The congress was a real who's who of the documentary field. Foreign documentarians serving as panelists included Su Xiaokang (China), Jean Rouch (France), Marina Goldovskaya (Russia), Masami Goto (Japan), Patricio Guzman (Chile), and Dennis O'Rourke (Australia). From the US, filmmakers such as Michael Moore (*Roger & Me*), Bill Miles and Nina Rosenblum (*The Liberators*), Jonathan Stack (*Damned in the USA*), Rob Epstein (*The Times of Harvey Milk*), Renee Tajima (*Who Killed Vincent Chin?*), Trinh T. Minh-ha (*Surname Viet, Given Name Nam*) and many others took part. The event culminated in an awards dinner, in which a special Lifetime Achievement Award was presented to Walter Cronkite.

The greatest strength of the Congress was the juxtaposition of panels giving concrete information alongside those that dealt with ethical and theoretical issues. Perhaps the most informative panel was that which opened the congress: Finding Money in the American Marketplace. Nine funders from the major documentary TV showcases and foundations gave nuts-and-bolts advice on how to submit proposals, what their funding levels are, what they look for, and more.

Denise Baddour, who is with acquisitions at the Discovery and the Learning Channels, said they receive 2,000 proposals a year—all highly competitive. One reason why is that this organization's funding is on the high side, with top-end budgets for hour-long projects ranging from $400,000 to $600,000. Film/videomakers must submit their ideas in writing and sign a release letter, Baddour advised—a point echoed by the other panelists. The release letter—a bone of contention with many filmmakers—basically protects the Discovery Channel (but not the filmmaker) in the event that the station was already considering the same idea.

Arts & Entertainment's director of documentary production Mike Cascio also said the network needs to see something in writing ("not a phone call"), but noted a short treatment of one or two pages would suffice. The producer should also include biographical information and spell out why he or she would be the best person to make the film. "The single base factor of whether a documentary gets on A&E is subject matter," Cascio stated. "There are three basic things A&E is doing right now and looking for: historical documentaries, which can be one at a time or a limited series; contemporary journalistic documentaries; and occasional nature and adventure shows."

Andrea Taylor, director of media projects at the Ford Foundation, said that the foundation does give money to media, but the projects must relate to one of the six areas Ford is interested in. These include international affairs; education and culture; governing and public policies; rights and social justice; rural poverty and resources; and urban poverty. While the Ford Foundation will consider funding any stage of a production, it never funds more than 20 to 30 percent of the entire cost. Additionally, the foundation looks at the ethnic and gender breakdown of the staff submitting the proposal.

Representatives from NEH, ITVS, CPB, PBS, HBO, and TBS ("a consortium of initials," quipped one filmmaker) rounded out the panel. (They are the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Independent Television Service, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Public Broadcasting Service, Home Box Office, and Turner Broadcasting System.) Whereas the cable networks had a general air of optimism regarding the work of independents, the others stressed the high degree of competitiveness.

Unfortunately, the next panel—Funding in the Global Marketplace—did not prove to be as informative. The five panelists, representing filmmakers, buyers, and programmers, seemed either discouraging or beyond reach. Mick Csaky, an independent producer from London, works way beyond the scope of most of the assembled film- and videomakers. He talked about taking his initial seed money (about $10,000-12,000) and using it to fly around the globe (Japan, Europe, US) to get further commitments. Additionally, he tries to sell a 12-part series rather than a single piece.

The representative from Japan's public station NHK reported that it had participated in more than 20 coproductions in 1992. It's a situation that they'd like to increase, he noted, but by contribut-

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ing equipment rather than money. Francois Levie of Belgium, a producer and authority on European fundraising sources, was less encouraging. She lamented the fact that every filmmaker in her country eventually must go to the television channel Canal Plus in France for funding. Since Canal Plus won't cover all the costs, it's necessary to approach France 2 and then go to the film markets, selling the work again and again—a process familiar to many US producers. On top of it, the documentary must have a distinct style, one that takes on the identity of the producer's country and can still be translated into at least eight languages.

A panel dealing with censorship brought together American and foreign filmmakers whose experiences were quite different. Patricio Guzman, who had once been imprisoned in Chile's National Stadium, recounted how he had to smuggle footage out of Chile, which he later edited into *The Battle of Chile*. Guzman, now a resident of Spain, sees censorship in the broadest sense, blaming the abundance of fiction films for removing us from reality. "We live in a dictatorship of fiction that asphyxiates us," he said. He also questioned the fact that filmmakers had begun to make "weird" documentaries to compete with fiction.

Marina Goldovskaya, a filmmaker who teaches at the University of Moscow, has a different take on censorship. She said, "There's no censorship at all" in today's Russia, but because of that, a new problem has arisen: now that the information barriers are down, everyone can say anything they want to say, and much of this information is reported in the media, whether reliable or not. Leonid Gurevitch, who is with the Associate Soviet Kino Initiative, added that censorship of the dollar is worse than censorship of the state.

In a panel called Rocking the Boat, which concerned itself largely with social documentaries, Michael Moore chastised filmmakers for being too serious and alienating a large part of their audience. Annoyed by the comic tone that Moore adapted, Guzman accused him of trying to turn the Congress into a cocktail party. Moore responded that he wasn't trying to be "silly," but to encourage documentarians to "lighten up a little bit" and stop being so removed from the people they wish to reach.

In general the Congress was anything but removed or silly. It addressed serious issues and concerns of documentarians as well as providing a rare opportunity to meet and network with other filmmakers whose speciality is the nonfiction form. The Congress was organized to mark the tenth anniversary of IDA. Harrison Engle, the IDA board of directors' chair, says they will probably do another congress at some point, though there are no plans to make it an annual event. "There's talk of future congresses," he said, "but certainly not this year." Then he added, "There's so much to discuss, and three days were not enough. It should have been a week long."

Karen Kramer is a documentary filmmaker living in New York.



This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser, director of the FIVF Festival Bureau. Listings do not constitute an endorsement. Since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. In order to improve our reliability and make this column more beneficial to independents, we encourage all film- and videomakers to contact FIVF Festival Bureau with their personal festival experiences, positive and negative.

Domestic

BLACKLIGHT, July 27-Aug. 10, IL. Month-long celebration of Black-produced & oriented int'l cinema. Program incl. features, shorts, docs, videos & TV. In past, fest has programmed new works by African, Caribbean & Black British filmmakers, as well as African American works. Retros & special programs part of fest. No entry fee. Formats: 3/4", 1/2", 35mm, 16mm, s-8, 8mm. Deadline: June 1. Contact: Floyd Webb, Blacklight, 1507 E. 53rd, #428, Chicago, IL 60615; (312) 649-4854.

BRECKENRIDGE FESTIVAL OF FILM, Sept. 23-26, CO. Noncompetitive fest for new ind. prods, now in 13th yr. Feature, shorts, doc, experimental, animated & educational films accepted. Program made up of approx. 30 films, incl. premieres, retros & ind. work. Critics Choice Award selected by audience balloting. Entry fee: $25 (entrants responsible for all shipping costs). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2"; preview on cassette. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Tamara K. Johnston, Breckenridge Festival of Film, Box 718, Breckenridge, CO 80424; (303) 453-6200.

GREAT PLAINS FILM FESTIVAL, July 13-25, NE. In its second yr, fest is a regional, competitive venue for ind. film & video artists working in the heartland of U.S. & Canada. Works must be completed between Jan. 1991 & April 1993. Artists must be from Great Plains or entries must relate in content or narrative to the area. $10,000 in prizes. Deadline: April 30. For entry form, contact: Great Plains Film Fest, Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater, Univ. of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE 68588-0302; (402) 472-5353.

LOS ANGELES INTERNATIONAL GAY & LESBIAN FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, July 8-18, CA. Presented by Gay & Lesbian Media Coalition, fest in 11th yr. Films & videos should be by &/or about lesbians, gays, bisexuals & transgenders. Features, shorts, docs, experimental works accepted. Entry fee: $5. Deadline: Apr. 16. Contact: Los Angeles Int'l Gay & Lesbian Film & Video Festival, Gay & Lesbian Media Coalition, 8228 Sunset Blvd., Ste 308, Los Angeles, CA 90046; (213) 650-5133; fax: (213) 650-2226.

MARGARET MEAD FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 2-10, NY. Premiere US fest for anthropological & ethnographic film & video accepts work w/ themes primarily on non-Western cultures, but also incl. Western culture; topics incl. community & family issues, indiv. portraits. Docudramas not accepted. Selected entrants receive fest passes & certificates of participation; some financial assistance available. Entry fees: $15 student, $30 ind. film/video, $75 TV/commercial film/video. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on cassette preferred. Deadline: May 1. Contact: Elaine Charnov, Margaret Mead Film & Video Festival, American Museum of Natural History, Education Dept., Central Park West at 79th St, New York, NY 10024; (212) 769-5305; fax: (212) 769-5329.

SANTA BARBARA LESBIAN AND GAY FILM FESTIVAL, Nov., CA. Film & video works of all genres accepted. Format: 16, 35mm and 1/2" video; previews on 1/2" cassette. Audience Award for best feature (over 60 min.) and best short. Include bio or resumé w/ address & phone, description of entry & technical info: length, format, gauge, credits & production stills. Entry fee: $10. Deadline: June 1. Contact: Mark Kerr, Lesbian and Gay Film Fest, P.O. Box 30794, Santa Barbara, CA 93130; fax: (805) 963-9086.

SHORT ATTENTION SPAN FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, June 11-12, CA. Entries up to 3 min. in all noncommercial cats (narrative, experimental, animation) accepted. Work may have originated on any format; preview on 1/2" only. Accepted entries screened at Artists' TV Access gallery w/ selected entries cablecast on ATA's weekly Thursday evening cable show. Entry fee: $5. Incl. SASE for return of videos. Deadline: May 14. Contact: Artists' TV Access, c/o Elizabeth Hall/SASFVF, 992 Valencia St, San Francisco, CA 94110; (415) 824-3890.

UFVA STUDENT FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Aug. 3-7, PA. Current student films & videos accepted for 1st annual competitive fest sponsored by University Film & Video Association, an int'l organization dedicated to film & video arts & sciences & to development of motion pictures as communication medium. Fest, held during UFVA conference at Temple Univ., emphasizes independence, creativity & new approaches to visual media. Cats: doc, experimental, narrative. Awards: 1st, 2nd & runners-up in each cat. Entries must have been created by persons enrolled in educational institution at time of prod & should have been completed no earlier than Aug. 1991. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on cassette. Deadline: May 15 (requests for extensions considered). Contact: Dave Kluft, UFVA Student Film & Video Festival, Dept. of Radio-TV-Film, Temple University, Philadelphia, PA 19122; (215) 923-4540.

Foreign

FILM+ARC INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL FOR FILM + ARCHITECTURE, Dec. 2-5, Austria. Organized by artimage & held in Graz, Austria, this fest presents an int'l forum for films & videos on architecture. Sections: architectural films competition, retros, special screening, thematic programs, symposium, exhibition. Competition open to all cats (fiction, doc, animation, experimental) on topics relating to architecture, urbanism, landscape architecture, or design. Int'l jury awards prizes, incl. Grand Prix of AS 70,000. All lengths accepted; entries must have been completed since June 30, 1991. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, s-8, Hi8, 3/4", 1/2", Betacam. Entry fee: ATS 500. Deadline: Aug. 31. Contact: Int'l Festival für Film+Architektur, artimage, Katzianergasse 3, A-8010 Graz, Austria; tel: 43 316 82 95 13; fax: 43 316 82 95 11.

IX INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 5-14, Madrid. Organized by Ateneo Feminista, a cultural nonprofit organization, fest presents works in cats of feature films, short films, docs, and video. Any movie of video directed by a woman can be entered. Works must have been completed after Jan. 1, 1991. Cash awards for Best Feature, Best Doc, Best Short Film & Best Video. Deadline: May 30. Contact: Int'l Women's Film Fest, Ateneo Feminista de Madrid, C.I.F. G28891299, c/. Barquillo, 44-2° 1, 28004 Madrid, Spain; tel: (91) 308 69 35.

SAO PAULO INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Aug. 19-29, Brazil. Est. in 1990, this noncompetitive fest celebrates its 4th edition this yr. Organized by Museum of Image & Sound of São Paulo (MIS) & linked w/ State Dept. of Culture, fest aims to exhibit work "that may contribute to development of short film concerning its language, specific shape & way of production." Max. length: 35 min. All genres accepted. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: May 20. Contact: Zita Carvalhosa, fest director, Int'l Short Film Festival of São Paulo, Museu Da Imagem E Do Som, Av. Europa 158, 01449 São Paulo, Brazil; tel: 55 11 282 8074; fax: 55 11 852 9601. US contact: Iara Lee, (212) 673-7652.

VIDE FIL VIDEO, Nov. 27-Dec. 5, Mexico. Annual video fest sponsored by Univ. of Guadalajara. Awards: 1st prize of $10,000 in each of 3 cats (fiction, doc, experimental). Entries must have been produced in 1992 or 1993. Works selected will be exhibited at University Bookfair. Tapes will be held in university archive (not distributed commercially). Deadline: June 30. US contact: Karen Ranucci, Int'l Media Resource Exchange, 124 Washington Pl, New York, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

Meet Marco Mueller

Festival Director
Locarno International Film Festival

Tuesday, April 27th
5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.
at AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, NYC
(between Bleecker and Houston)

AIVF will host a reception in honor of Marco Mueller. Take advantage of this opportunity to ask questions, mingle, and gain important insights into festivals from the former head of the Pesaro and Rotterdam Film Festivals, and current head of the Locarno Festival. Space is limited; please call (212) 473-3400 now to reserve your place.

Buy ▪ Rent ▪ Sell

7 PLASTIC YAKS, collection of video art from Kirk-o-Matic (TM). 30-min. VHS tape incls: Dart Hole, Royal Con Aqua, Apes in Shades & Big State Prawn OFF, Big Bro! Great for museums, access TV, PBS, video art, video fest. Send $12 to Box 163773, Austin, TX 78716.

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OXBERRY 35MM & 16MM RENTALS in Rochester, NY animation studio. Low commercial rates & special rates for ind. film prods. Fred Armstrong or Skip Battaglia (716) 244-6550.

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SEEKING NEW WORKS for educational & health care markets, Fanlight Productions distributes films/videos in areas of health, sociology, psychology, etc. Karen McMillen, Fanlight Prods, 47 Halifax St, Boston, MA 02130; (800) 937-4113.

INT'L FEST OF SHORT FILMS seeks films for new compilations. 1st & 2nd feature-length pkgs of live-action shorts currently touring N. America. Contact: Andalusian Pictures, 1081 Camino del Rio S. #125, San Diego, CA 92108; (800) 925-CINE; fax: (619) 497-0811.

VARIED DIRECTIONS, distributor of child abuse & health tapes, seeks socially important films/videos. Long & successful track record due to selectivity & attention to programs we choose. Contact: Joyce, 69 Elm St, Camden, ME 04843; (800) 888-5236.

SEEKING NEW WORKS for educational mkts. Educational Prods distributes videos on early childhood education, special ed. & parent ed. Linda Freedman, Educational Prods, 7412 SW Beaverton Hillsdale Hwy, Portland, OR 97225. (800) 950-4949.

Each entry in the Classifieds column has a 250-character limit & costs $25 per issue. Ads exceeding this length will be edited. Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified must be typed, double-spaced & worded exactly as it should appear. Deadlines are the 8th of each month, two months prior to the cover date (e.g. April 8 for the June issue). Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012.

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ALTERNATIVE FILMWORKS, experimental film distrib. seeks ind. film/video works, any length. No mainstream films. Send videotape copy to: alternative filmworks, Dept. IC, 259 Oakwood Ave, State College, PA 16803-1698; (814) 867-1528; fax: 9488.

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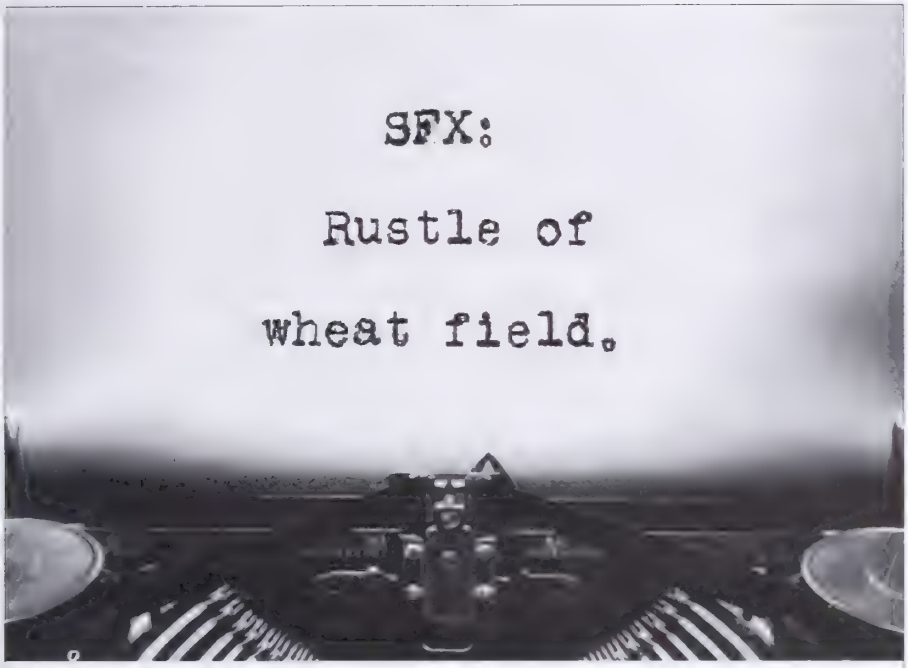
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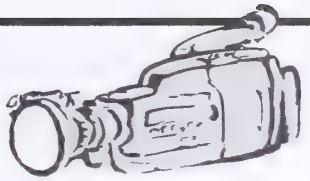
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Conferences ▪ Seminars

AMERICAN FILM AND VIDEO ASSOCIATION celebrates 50th anniv. in 1993. Special events incl. 35th American Film & Video Festival & Conference, May 26-30, Chicago. Theme: "New Technologies: Frontiers of Media Production" w/ demos of new tech, workshops on intellectual freedom, copyright/fair use, library security systems, etc. Contact: AFVA, Box 48659, Niles, IL 60714; (708) 698-6440.

BENTON FOUNDATION announces 1st Advocacy Video Conference on uses of video as advocacy tool, Washington, DC, May 21-23. Public interest leaders, video producers & foundation executives invited. For info, incl. registration & video nomination forms, contact: Kay Johnson, Project Asst., Benton Fndtn, 1710 Rhode Island, NW, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 857-7829, ext. 25; fax: (202) 857-7841.

MONTAGE 93: Int'l Festival of the Image celebrates fusion of art & tech & explores future of visual communications, July 11-Aug. 7, NY. Exhibitions, trade show, lectures, symposia and arts performances. Call for info: (800) 724-4332.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MEDIA ARTS CENTERS (NAMAC) conference, Rewiring Our Networks, June 3-6, Chicago. Cosponsored by AIVF. Preregistration (before May 3): $85 for AIVF & NAMAC individual members, $95 nonmember individuals; $110 NAMAC institutional members, $160 institutional nonmembers. Registration: $115 individual members, $125 individual nonmembers; $140 institutional members, $195 institutional nonmembers. Single-day registration: $50 members, $60 nonmembers. Send checks to: NAMAC, 1212 Broadway, Ste 816, Oakland, CA 94612; (510) 451-2717.

NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL MEDIA MARKET, CA, May 19-21. Only media market in country specifically designed for buying & selling doc, educational & special interest media. Also, seminars and workshops on funding, distribution, new tech & market trends (May 18-23). Contact: (510) 465-6885.

REPLITECH INT'L presents 3-day conference & expo for duplicators & replicators of video & audio tape, optical discs & floppy disks, June 15-17, Santa Clara, CA. Contact: Benita Roumanis, Knowledge Industry Pubs, 701 Westchester Ave, White Plains, NY 10604; (914) 328-9157; fax: 9093.

YELLOWSTONE MEDIA ARTS Summer Workshops, May 24-June 25, MT. Intensive workshops offered in the heart of the Rockies, incl.: (May 24-June 4) Intro to Digitized Photography; From Manager to Mogul: Playing the Producer's Game; Stereography: Historical & Contemporary 3-D Photography; (May 24-June 11) Advanced Screenwriting; (June 5-6) Film Directing; (June 7-18) Images of Women; (June 7-25) Contemporary European Film & TV. Contact: MSU Summer Session, 303 Montana Hall, MSU, Bozeman, MT 59717; (406) 994-6683.

Films ▪ Tapes Wanted

AXELGREASE, wkly public access program, seeks experimental, narrative, animation, doc & computer imaging under 27 mins. Showcases video & film on Buffalo access & around US. Send 1/2", 3/4", Beta, 8mm, or Hi8 tapes to: Axlegrease, c/o Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo Media Resources, 372 Connecticut St, Buffalo, NY 14213; (716) 884-7172.



Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length. Deadlines for Notices will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., March 8 for the May issue). Send to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

BAD TWIN, NY-based prod./exhibition collective, seeks films under 30 min. for ongoing programs in Europe & US. Alternative approaches to all genres & forms welcomed. Must have finished 16mm prints avail. Submit VHS only for preview; incl. SASE. Contact: Bad Twin, Box 528, Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276.

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable TV System, seeks works by ind. video & filmmakers for access airing. Bronxnet produces programs &, whenever possible, facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, (718) 960-1180.

CABLE ACCESS SHOW seeks short drama, doc, animation & experimental films/videos. Interested parties should send 3/4" copies to: Quick Flicks c/o Eugene Haynes, 814 10th Ave, #3A, New York, NY 10019 or call (212) 642-5236.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video art interstitials to play btwn alternative music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTER FOR NEW TV (CNTV) seeks 3/4", VHS or Hi8 work for cable access show. Contact: CNTV, 1440 N. Dayton St, Chicago, IL 60622.

CENTRAL AMERICAN NEWS PROJECT seeks indivs to produce news & public affairs pieces for monthly access show on Central America. Contribute footage or contacts w/ people in CA w/ film or video equip. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St, Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks works on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Laura Greenfield, Cable TV Manager, City TV, 1685 Main St, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (213) 458-8590.

COMEDY CENTRAL seeks comedic student/ind. films & videos up to 3 mins to air on its flagship program, Short Attention Span Theater. Must have broadcast rights. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes to: Josh Lebowitz, HBO Downtown Prods., 120 E. 23rd St, 6th fl, New York, NY 10010; (212) 512-8851.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" Beta & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Tanya Steele, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St, New York, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on varied subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, Ste 4768, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10112.

FLICKTURES seeks 2-5 min comedy prods, any genre, any style, to air on L.A. cable access; possible deferred pay. Send 3/4", 1/2", Beta or super 8 w/ SASE to: Flicktures, c/o Barker/Morgan Prods, 12039 Allin St, Culver City, CA 90230-5802.

FORUM GALLERY, Jamestown Community College, seeks media that address environmental issues for "Artists Consider Environment" exhibition, Nov.-Dec. 1993. Deadline: April 15. Each slide, film or video must incl. name of artist, dimensions of work or running time, title & media. Send no more than 10 35mm slides, resumé & related support materials w/ SASE to: Artists Consider the Environment, Forum Gallery, Jamestown Community College, Box 20, Jamestown, NY 14702-0020. For info, contact: Michelle Henry, (716) 665-9107.

LESBIANS IN THE CREATIVE ARTS (LICA) invites submissions of original works for an Evening w/ LICA video cabaret. Artists must own all rights. Contact: Video, Ste 443, 496A Hudson St, New York, NY 10014.

LITTLE HORN PICTURES seeks ind. produced shorts for public access program. Doc, drama, animation. Any length up to 45 min. Student work welcome. Send VHS preview tape to: Little Horn Pictures, c/o Eric Rogers, 600 McCall Rd, Greenville, SC 29607; (803) 967-0854. Incl. producer's name, address & phone number.

MINORITY TELEVISION PROJECT, Bay Area multicultural public TV station, invites programming from ind. directors, producers & writers who have person of color in key creative position & present crosscultural perspectives. Children's, entertainment, animation, features, health, education & lifestyles sought. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes (orig. must be on 3/4" or 1" for broadcast.) to: John Weber, programming director, 1311 Sutter St, San Francisco, CA 94109; (415) 394-5687.

NATIVE VOICES seeks proposals for 2 half-hour cultural affairs progs by/for Montana Native Americans. Contact: Native Voices Public TV Workshop, Dept. of Film & TV, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59717; (406) 994-6223.

NOMAD VIDEO seeks works from videomakers of all ages, backgrounds & skill levels for monthly screenings. Screenings showcase grassroots artists at changing locations around Seattle area. Send VHS, S-VHS or Hi8 & SASE to: Gavin the Nomad, 501 N. 36th St #365, Seattle, WA 98103; (206) 781-0653.

PACIFIC ARTS seeks selected domestic & foreign ind. projects—narrative, animation, doc, experimental & performance—to air on wkly cable access show. Any theme, any length. Projects credited. Submit 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Pacific Arts, Box 533, Farmington, MI 48332-0533.

PERALTA COLLEGES TV (PCTV), multicultural educational station reaching 200,000 homes in Oakland-Berkeley area, seeks challenging social-issue docs &

culturally diverse TV programs. Rare alternative outlet in Bay area. Excellent exposure. Submit 3/4" or VHS tape w/ short description & letter granting local cablecast rights to: PCTV programming, 900 Fallon St, Oakland, CA 94607; (510) 464-3253.

PMS (POST-MODERN SISTERS), nat'ly touring exhibition program, looking for innovative & challenging short films by women for future programs. Contact: Lisa Austin, (415) 648-3810 or Susanne Fairfax, (415) 751-3507.

QUICK FLICKS, NYC ind cable access TV show, seeks short subject drama, doc, animation & experimental films & videos. Send 3/4" U-matic copies to Quick Flicks c/o Eugene Haynes, 814 10th Ave, #3A, New York, NY 10019; (212) 642-5236.

REEL TIME, monthly film series at Performance Space 122, seeks experimental, doc & narrative films. Submit super 8 & 16 mm to: Jim Browne, c/o Reel Time, P.S. 122, 150 1st Ave, New York, NY 10009; (212) 477-5288.

THE 90's seeks short (under 15 min.) doc, music & experimental Hi8 works for nat'l broadcast. Excerpts, works-in-progress accepted. Pays $150/min. Contact: Fund for Innovative TV, 400 N. Michigan Ave, #1608, Chicago, IL 60611; (312) 321-9321.

TOONTOWN RATS, Artists TV Access' new animation forum, seeks animated shorts. Send submissions to: Artists Television Access, 992 Valencia St, San Francisco, CA 94110; or contact Keith Knight, (415) 752-4037/824-3890.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, cablecast on DUTV, Drexel University's channel 54, seeks narrative, animation, experimental, performance & doc works by young filmmakers from Philly & elsewhere. Show reaches 767,000 households in 3 states. Contact: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St, Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

WILLOW MIXED MEDIA seeks Amiga-based works for Amiga Artists on the Air, prog. distributed on cable access & video. Small fee. Submit material on 3.5" Amiga disks, VHS, 3/4" tape to: Toby Carey, Willow Mixed Media, Box 194, Lenox Ave, Glenford, NY 12433; (914) 657-2914.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database which incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & biographical data. Contact: Helen Lee, Women of Color in Media Arts Database, Women Make Movies, 225 Lafayette, Ste 207, New York, NY 10012; (212) 925-0606.

WYOU-TV, cable access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for wkly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St, Madison, WI 53703.

Opportunities ▪ Gigs

ADELPHI UNIVERSITY, located 18 miles from Manhattan, seeks asst professor to teach film & video & to direct professional internship program. Req.: exp. teaching media prod. from technical & creative perspective, knowledge of film/video art, history & analysis & substantial body of work. Must appreciate changing nature of undergraduate instruction & have interest in redefining relation btwn general education & specialized study in all disciplines. Send letter of appl., resume & philosophy of teaching prod. to: Dean William

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5-9 Copies	3.00	2.50	4.50	3.50	7.00	5.00	7.00	8.00
10-19 Copies	2.50	2.00	4.00	3.00	6.00	4.50	6.00	7.00
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MEDIA ALLIANCE board of directors now accepting resumés for Executive Director of NY State media arts membership org. Works w/ membership-elected board, staff & membership committees to develop and facilitate collaborative services; promote work of members; advocate for media arts field. Must have skills in networking, communication, fundraising, fiscal management; offer experience in ind. media arts & able to work w/ diverse constituency. Send resumé to: Search Committee, Media Alliance, 356 W. 58th St, NY, NY 10019.

SARAH LAWRENCE COLLEGE seeks to fill half-time, tenure-track position to teach filmmaking as part of liberal arts curriculum. Candidate should have ability to teach both beginning & advanced classes & indiv. as well as group studies. SLC is a small liberal arts college located north of NYC. Send resumé & 3 letters of reference (films not requested at this stage) to : Janet Held, faculty secretary, SLC, Bronxville, NY 10708. Women & people of color encouraged to apply.

WORLD CONGRESS ON BIOMEDICAL COMMUNICATIONS announces call for participation. Organized by medical imaging & communication societies from around world, conference expected to draw professionals from media production, computer graphics, etc., to address the theme of Global Images in Health & Science. Deadline: June 1993. For abstract entry form, contact: World Congress Meeting, Professional Conferences, 25 Mauchly, Ste 305, Irvine, CA 92718; (714) 753-8680.

Publications

CENSORSHIP & FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS: A PRIMER incl. collection of case studies & cases w/ listing of anti-censorship orgs & section on defending 1st Amendment rights. Send $10 to: American Booksellers Foundation for Freedom of Expression, 560 White Plains Rd, Tarrytown, NY 10591.

CRITICAL ESSAYS ON GERMAN CINEMA, anthology being edited for R. Gottesman & H. Geduld's Critical Essays on Film Series, seeks papers. Papers analyzing film texts of German cinema from silent period to present welcome, as are metacritical elaborations of these films &/or theoretical frameworks. Deadline: July 1. Send new papers or published articles to both: Kirsten Thompson, 103 St Mark's Park, #5C, New York, NY 10009 & Terri Ginsberg, 80 Central Park West, #15H, New York, NY 10023.

DIRECTORY OF WOMEN'S MEDIA, 16th edition, announces new feminist information tools. Published by Women's Institute for Freedom of Press, directory incl. brief descriptions of over 1,300 print & electronic media, publishers, bookstores, libraries, archives, distributors & other media resources for, by & about women. National Council for Research on Women, 47-49 E. 65th St, New York, NY 10021; (212) 570-5001.

DISC MAKERS GUIDE TO MASTER TAPE PREPARATION avail. free upon request from Philadelphia-based audio manufacturer. 45-page booklet, revised & updated for 1992, explains how to prepare master tape for error-free mass prod. All formats covered, including all-new section on DAT. Contact: Tony van Veen, (800) 468-9353.

FILMMAKERS COOPERATIVE announces 1993 Catalogue #7 Supplement, 30th anniversary edition. Cooperative archives & rents lgst number of ind. &

avant-garde films & videotapes in world. Filmmaker's Cooperative, 175 Lexington Ave, New York, NY 10016; (212) 889-3820.

GRIFFITHIANA: JOURNAL OF FILM HISTORY, Italian journal devoted exclusively to study of silent cinema & animation, features work of film scholars & archivists from around world. Articles in both English & Italian. $18/individuals, $40/institutions. Avail. from Johns Hopkins University Press. To subscribe, call Darla Dmitri (410) 516-6944.

GUIDE TO PUBLIC TELEVISION FUNDING published by Corporation for Public Broadcasting to help producers understand program funding. Send SASE (#10 envelope) to: *Who Funds PTV?*, CPB Publications, 901 E. St NW, Washington, DC 20004-2006; (202) 879-9600.

IN HER OWN IMAGE: Films & Videos Empowering Women for Future, singled out as best new media publication of 1992 by American Film & Video Assoc., features reviews of more than 80 works exploring wide range of issues affecting women around world, indexed by geography, subject, title & appropriate audience. Includes essays on int'l women's issues & uses of media for social change in community & classroom. Avail. from Media Network, (212) 929-2663.

MEDIATING HISTORY: THE MAP GUIDE TO INDEPENDENT VIDEO by & about African American, Asian American, Latino & Native American people. Edited by Barbara Abrash & Catherine Egan. Invaluable guide to multicultural historical videos incl. annotated list of 126 works; insightful essays by film scholars & programmers; overviews by media critics on media & teaching of history; alternative media directory; thematic & chronological indices. 200 pgs. $12.95 paper/$30 cloth. Avail. from New York University Press, 70 Washington Square S., New York, NY 10012; (212) 998-2575; fax: (212) 995-3833.

NAMAC offers 1992 member directory, up-to-the-minute compilation of resource & contact info relevant to media arts, community, cultural & educational orgs & mediamakers. Incl. descriptions of 132 media arts centers w/ org history, mission, budget, collections, demographics of audiences & artists, facilities, publications, etc. Send check payable to NAMAC for $25 nonmembers/$12 NAMAC members to: NAMAC, 1212 Broadway, Ste 816, Oakland, CA 94612.

Resources ▪ Funds

ARTSLINK supports creative exchange btwn US & Eastern European, former Soviet & Baltic countries. Collaborative Projects provides support for US artists undertaking collaborations with colleagues in region. Fellowships allow US arts orgs to host an artist or arts manager from the region in short-term residency. Deadline: April 5. Contact: Artslink, Arts & Media Programs, Citizen Exchange Council, 12 W. 31st St, New York, NY 10001-4451; (212) 643-1985.

CREATIVE TIME sponsors projects by visual & performing artists as part of ongoing CityWide series. Goal to bring art to untapped sites in NYC. No deadline; proposals reviewed every 3-4 mo. Send 5 copies of project description; description of desired public site; technical assessment, incl. consideration of vandalism, security, projects material stability & utilities description; resumés of all participants; budget; up to 10 slides of past work of each participant w/ accompanying descriptions; 1/2" or 3/4" video of past work, no longer

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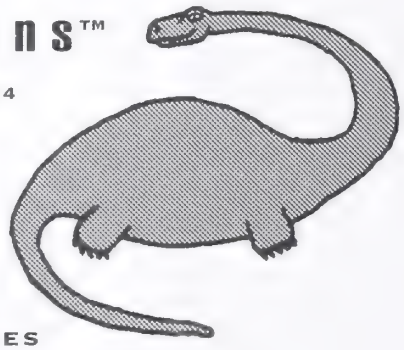
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FILM IN THE CITIES Regional Film/Video Grants for residents of MN, ND, SD, WI & IA awards Production Grants up to $16,000 for new projects; Completion Grants up to $7,000 for works-in-progress & Encouragement Grants up to $3,000 for indivs w/ promise but limited directing experience. Commercial & instructional projects & f/t students & orgs ineligible. Deadline: April 30. For appl., contact Film in the Cities (612) 646-6104.

FILM PRESERVATION PROGRAM, joint program of Nat'l Endowment for Arts & Nat'l Center for Film & Video Preservation at American Film Institute, awards grants to help orgs preserve & restore films of artistic or cultural value. Tax-exempt orgs can apply. Must have archival film collection, adequate staff & equipment to carry out project. Grants are matching, generally less than $25,000. For appl. & info, contact: AFI/NEA Film Preservation Program, National Center for Film & Video Preservation at AFI, John F. Kennedy Center, Washington, DC 20566; (202) 828-4070.

FIRST FILM FOUNDATION, charitable foundation based in London, offers assistance, expertise & contacts in A/V industry for new talents w/ 1st film project for TV or cinema. All genres, incl. animation. Contact: First Film Foundation, Canalot Production Studios, 222 Kensal Road, London W10 5BN, England; (44) (81) 969 51 95; (44) (81) 960 63 02.

FULBRIGHT PROFESSIONAL FILM & TV FELLOWSHIP offers professional mediamakers an opportunity to pursue extended work in the UK in 1994-95. Minimum 3 yrs professioanl experience & US citizenship required. Applicants design program of creative work, combining professional & artistic work w/ contributions to community (e.g., workshops, lectures, etc.). Proposals of a purely academic nature ineligible. Awards £12,000 & travel expenses for 6-9 month stay. Deadline: August 1. For appl., contact: (202) 686-7878 & leave message. For info, contact: Dr. Karen Adams (202) 686-6245 or Ms. Jane Mangan (202) 686-6242 or write to UK Film & TV Fulbright Award, CIES, 3007 Tilden St, NW, Ste 5M, Box F-UKF, Washington, DC 20008-3009.

HANOVER SQUARE Prods 1993 Feature Film Screenplay Competition is accepting appls. Awards $20,000 each to a maximum of 5 writers. All genres, but must have commercial viability. Deadline: June 1. For appl., send SASE to: Feature Film Screenplay Competition c/o Hanover Square Productions, 7510 Sunset Blvd, Ste 241, Los Angeles, CA 90046. For info, contact John Edwards (310) 288-6326.

INDO-US SUBCOMMISSION on Education & Culture offers long-term (6-10 months) & short-term (2-3 months) awards for 1994-95 research in India. All disciplines, except clinical medicine, eligible. Applicants must be US citizens w/ Ph.D. or comparable professional qualifications. Those w/ limited or no prior experience in India especially encouraged to apply. Deadline: Aug. 1. For appl. or info., contact: Council for Int'l Exchange of Scholars, 3007 Tilden St, Ste 5M, Box INDO-NEWS, Washington, DC 20008-3009; (202) 686-4017.

INTER-MEDIA ARTS CENTER offers local graphic artists w/ experience in 3-D animation and 2-D graphics free access to equipment for participation in collaborative arts projects. Org. has 3/4" A/B/C/D roll computer, chroma-key, computer graphics & 3-D animation

The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers

When you join the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, you're doing something for yourself—and for others. Membership entitles you to a wide range of benefits. Plus, it connects you with a national network of independent producers. Adding your voice helps us all. The stronger AIVF is, the more we can act as advocate for the interests of independents like yourself—inside the corridors of Washington, with the press, and with others who affect our livelihoods.

8 Benefits of Membership

THE INDEPENDENT

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*. Published 10 times a year, the magazine is a vital source of information about the independent media field. Each issue helps you get down to business with festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and more. Plus, you'll find thought-provoking features, coverage of the field's news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters.

THE FESTIVAL BUREAU

AIVF maintains up-to-date information on over 650 national and international festivals, and can help you determine which are right for your film or video.

Liaison Service

AIVF works directly with many foreign festivals, in some cases collecting and shipping tapes or prints overseas, in other cases serving as the U.S. host to visiting festival directors who come to review work.

Tape Library

Members can house copies of their work in the AIVF tape library for screening by visiting festival programmers. Or make your own special screening arrangements with AIVF.

INFORMATION SERVICES

Distribution

In person or over the phone, AIVF can provide information about distributors and the kinds of films, tapes, and markets in which they specialize.

AIVF's Member Library

Our library houses information on distributors, funders, and exhibitors, as well as sample contracts, funding applications, budgets, and other matters.

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PENNSYLVANIA HUMANITIES COUNCIL supports humanities projects throughout state. Strong Pennsylvania connection required, either in subject matter or producer residence. Proposal drafts 6-8 weeks in advance of deadline recommended. Deadline: October 1. For appl., contact: PHC, 320 Walnut St, Ste 305, Philadelphia, PA 19106-3892; (215) 925-1005.

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WESTERN STATES REGIONAL MEDIA ARTS FELLOWSHIPS award up to $7,000 for new works & works-in-progress by artists in AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY & Pacific Territories. Deadline: June 5. For info, contact Portland Art Museum Northwest Film Center (503) 221-1156.

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THE INDEPENDENT

In the June issue

Regional Spotlight: CHICAGO

Chicago politics on film
From the 1972 Democratic convention to Carol Mosley Braun

Feature filmmaking
Independent productions leave the Windy City breathless

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MINUTES FROM THE AIVF/FIVF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The board of directors of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) met in New York on January 10, 1993. In attendance were: Dai Sil Kim-Gibson (chair), Robert Richter (president), Dee Davis (vice president), Debra Zimmerman (treasurer), Loni Ding (secretary), Joan Braderman, James Schamus, Bart Weiss, Ruby Lerner (ex officio); Eugene Alienikoff and Norman Wang (FIVF board.) Absent were Charles Burnett, Christine Choy, and Wilder Knight.

Kim-Gibson read Choy's letter of resignation. First board alternate Jim Klein will replace Choy.

AIVF administrative director Kathryn Bowser told the board she will work part-time beginning in mid-February. She will arrange for sales of the *AIVF Festival Guide* to bookstores, but publicity will have to wait until more money is available.

The Independent editor Patricia Thomson reviewed the magazine's marketing plan. She also updated the board on the new computerized billing program for display ads, and the magazine staff's efforts to collected advertising debts. It was suggested that AIVF hire a West Coast ad rep on commission.

Membership director Stephanie Richardson reviewed the problems with the mailhouse, which resulted in many AIVF members not receiving their December *Independent*. Membership has reached the 5,000 mark, excluding comps and press. The board discussed board election procedures and ways to improve the process.

Development director Susan Kennedy updated the board on pending grant applications and on the Advancement Grant surveys, which have gone out to members and former members.

Richter reported for the AIVF Advocacy Committee on PBS's usurpation of video rights for programs it broadcasts and funds. Thomson reported on the meetings held regarding the Silver Screen development project taking place in Chelsea on the Hudson River piers.

The board approved Lerner's report and plan to reduce the organization's debt, which involved staff and programmatic cuts and enhancing earned income activities. The proposed budget was unanimously approved.

Board elections were held, resulting in approval of the following slate*: Zimmerman, chair; Kim-Gibson, president; Richter, vice president; Schamus, treasurer; and Weiss, secretary.

Future board meetings are scheduled for: March 20-21 in New York (with annual membership meeting on March 19); June 5 in Chicago (tentative), coinciding with NAMAC conference; and October 2 in New York (tentative).

* Subsequent to the board meeting, Kim-Gibson resigned as president, and Richter moved up to fill the post. A new vice president will be elected at the March 1993 board meeting.

MEMBERABILIA

Congratulations to AIVF members who received 1992 **Guggenheim Fellowships**: New York video artist Irit Batsry, Boston-based film animator and professor Flip Johnson, California-based filmmaker and lecturer Nina Menkes, and California film animator and professor Maureen Selwood. Independent producer Vernon Clarke received a grant from the **Georgia Humanities Council** to continue work on a historical documentary.

Kudos to our Midwestern members who received Media Arts Fellowships from the **Center for New Television**: Chicagoans Mahrnaz Saeed-Vafa, Yvonne Welbon, Loretta Smith, and Zeinabu Irene Davis, plus Edward Boilini from Indianapolis, and Daniel Friedman from Yellow Springs, Ohio.

North Carolina filmmaker Jeff Leighton's short film *Goodnight, Alden* won honorable mention in the **American Film/Video Festival** and the literature category at the **Birmingham International Film Festival**, Juror's Choice at the **Carolina Film/Video Festival**, a cash prize in the **Sinking Creek Film Festival**, and was a finalist in the **Houston Worldfest '92**.

The **Massachusetts Foundation** has awarded a production grant to Catherine Russo to support the *Boston Women's History Project*. California member John Williams received a John McCarran Arts Criticism grant for $1,000 from San Francisco **Artspace**. Mara Alper received a fellowship from the **MacDowell Colony** to pursue work on an experimental documentary on incest. Alper also received a grant from the **Axe-Houghton Foundation** for a historical documentary on America's first woman astronomer.

Washington, DC, member Aviva Kempner received a **1992 Mid-Atlantic Region Media Arts Fellowship** grant and a grant from the **National Endowment for the Arts** for her documentary *The Life and Times of Hank Greenberg*. Van McElwee also received a grant from the NEA and the **American Film Institute** Regional Fellowship Program. McElwee was recently an Artist-in-Residence at the **Experimental Television Center** in Owego, New York. Buffalo, New York-based filmmaker Lawrence Brose also received a residency at the ETC. He was the sole filmmaker represented at the 1992 **São Paulo Short Film Festival** in Brazil, at which he lectured on US experimental filmmaking.

Eight AIVF members garnered **Southeast Film and Video Fellowships** from Appalshop: John D. Allen and Scott Auerbach in Atlanta, Scott Barber and Callie Warner of Chapel Hill, North Carolina, Walter Brock (Lexington, KY), Nietzchka Keene (Miami, FL), Doug Loggins (Decatur, GA), and Peter Wentworth (Charleston, SC).

Oregon-based filmmaker Kelley Baker earned a certificate of merit at the **Chicago International Film Festival** for his short *You'll Change*. Also in the Northwest, Seattle-based videographer Mark Dworkin received a $50,000 grant from the **John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation** for *Retooling America*, a documentary about the post Cold-War conversion of the US economy from military to consumer production.

Congratulations to Ken Kobland and Jeanne C. Finley, who were grand prize winners at the **Montbeliard Video Festival**, and to Bill Harder, whose video *Listen to the Children: Divorce Education for Parents* was a finalist in the 1992 **International Health and Medical Film Festival**. Brooklyn's Demetria Royals was recently a grant from the **National Black Programming Consortium** for research and development of the *Conjurers* project, a series on African American artists.

Kudos to New York member Leslie Harris on signing a deal with **Miramax** for worldwide distribution of her first feature film, *Just Another Girl on the IRT*.

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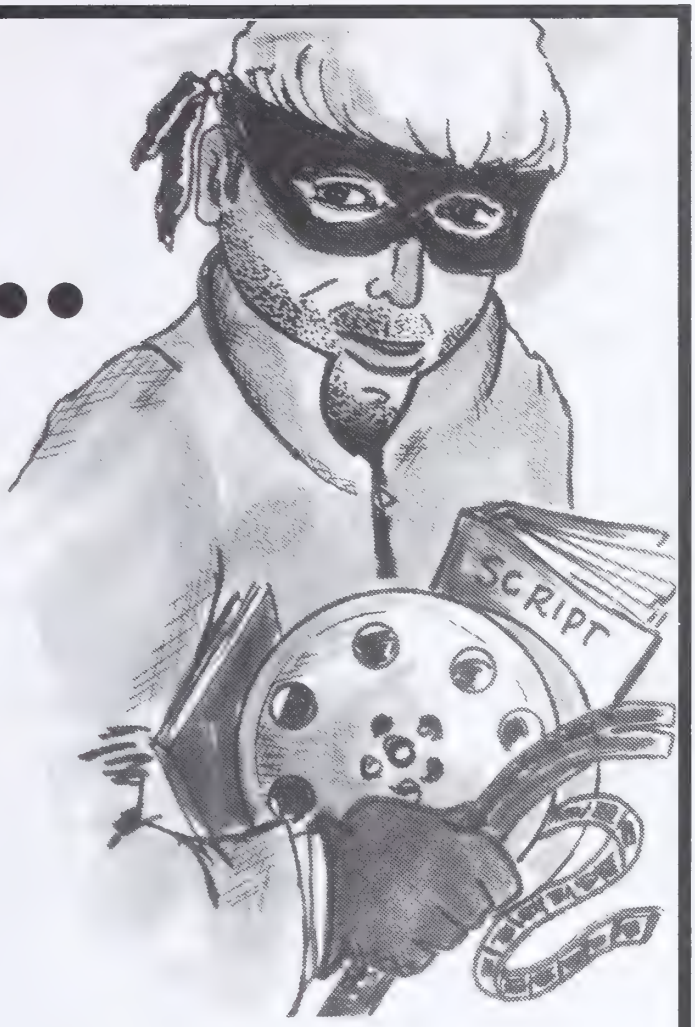
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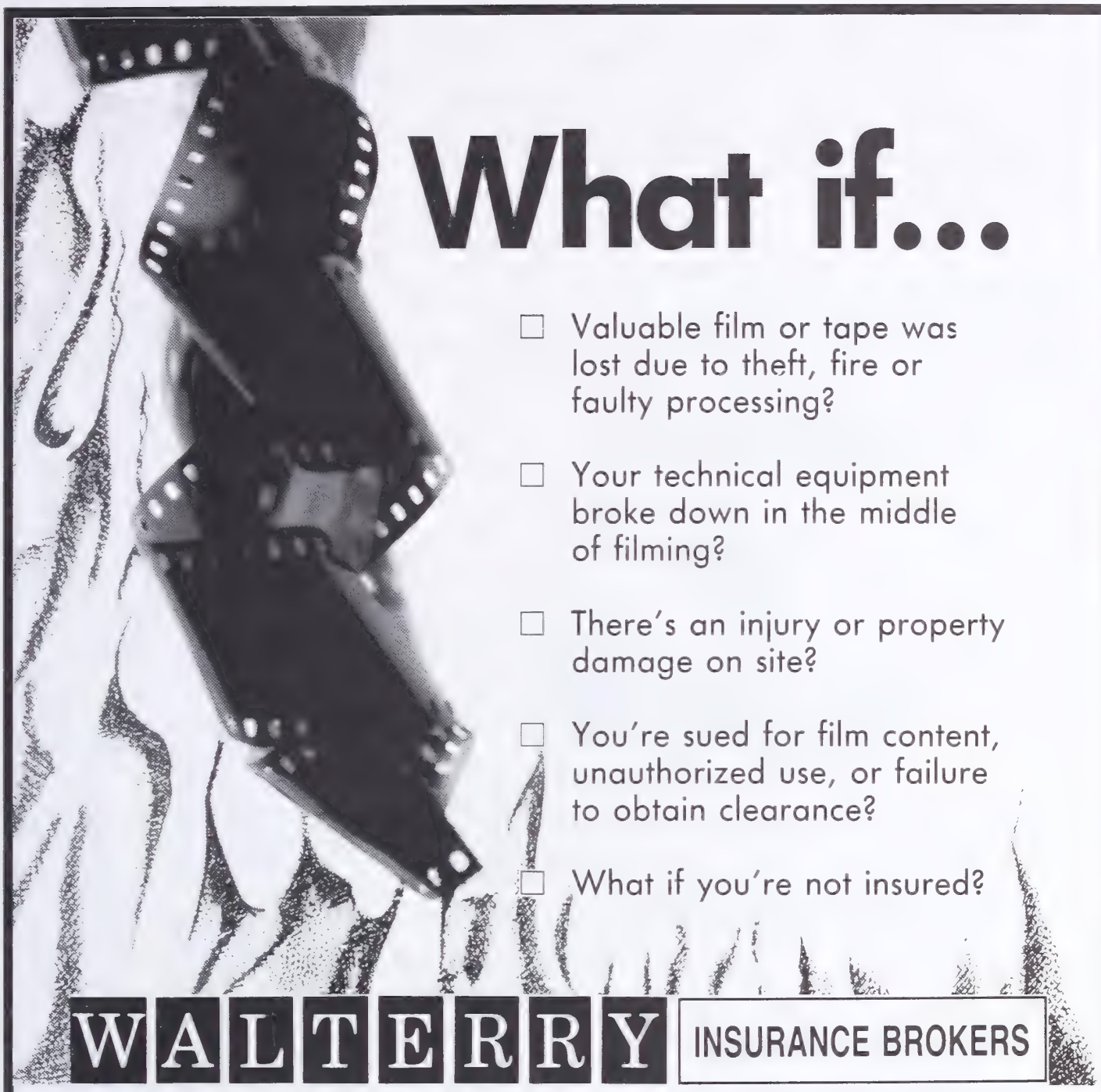
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* FIVF Board of Directors only

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CHERRIES JUBILEE

To the editor:

The Independent's recent feature by Laura U. Marks on Ken Jacobs' *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* ["Here's Gazing at You: A New Spin on Old Porn Exposes Gender and Generation Gaps," March 1993] is insightful in its analysis of the ways in which reactions to that film reveal diverse positions with respect to feminism, pornography, pop culture, and the practices of a certain generation of avant-garde filmmakers.

I believe, however, that Marks may have overstated the extent to which feminist and avant-garde agendas overlap. Both are interested in disrupting certain norms, whether patriarchal or narrative. Certainly Jacobs' dissection of this fragment of footage is open-ended enough to invite any number of readings, sympathetic and hostile, puritanical and liberated, feminist and anti-feminist. Marks' essay is admirable in its effort to situate Jacobs' formal experiment in the context of any number of theoretical and political debates. In this sense, she has met the challenge that Constance Penley and Janet Bergstrom posed in the magazine *Screen* to move critical writings on experimental film beyond the merely canonical and celebratory, and, to use Marks' words, to "rehistoricize the avant-garde."

But it would be a mistake to say that the film is concerned with these power relations, for although it may stimulate a thoughtful viewer like Marks to an analysis of these issues, *XCXHXEXRXRXIXEXSX* plays with time, space, motion, the flicker—in other words, with a number of the formal properties of film. There is a distinction to be made between a text that critiques the asymmetrical power relations we find in the world and a formalist one, which is then positioned in a social and historical context by a perceptive writer.

Jesse Lerner
Los Angeles, CA

ERRATA

In Ingalisa Schrobsdorff's article "On the Outs with Oscar," which appeared in the March 1993 issue, a quote by Bruce Davis, executive director of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences, was accidently attributed to Academy president Robert Rehme. The quote should read as follows: "Certainly people will get upset if you break their rice bowls," Davis said, and added that it may not be what anyone wants, but it is possible "an era of movie history has ended."

SACRAMENTO SACRILEGE

California Arts Council Struggles to Survive

Triaging his way through the state's worst financial crisis, California Governor Pete Wilson suggested novel surgery early this year: cut off the California Arts Council (CAC).

In January, Wilson proposed "privatizing" CAC, calling for a 50 percent cut in next year's $12.7-million budget and zero funding the following year. Privatization, Wilson argues, would permit the establishment of revenue-generating programs so the Council could continue to fund at least some of its activities, including arts in education and educational grants programs, on a self-sustaining basis.

One month later a compromise plan was agreed to that has the support of both the Governor's Office and CAC, led by Wilson appointee Joanne Kozberg. The "funding realignment plan" calls for a 20 percent funding cut in FY 93-94 and a loss of two-thirds of CAC's 1991 funding ($15.8-million) over the next three years. Elimination of the Arts Council, a plan that has considerable support in the state assembly (two bills were introduced into the legislature last year calling for CAC's elimination) was avoided.

For film and video organizations, CAC's financial support amounts to only six percent ($318,000) of CAC's total organization support grants, and the Council provides meager funding to the state's media organizations. Film Arts Foundation, for instance, with a $600,000 budget, gets just three percent of its funding ($18,000) from CAC. Typically, CAC media grants are under $10,000. Visual Communications, for instance, received $9,500 in FY 93, which amounts to just over three percent of its $300,000 annual budget. Linda Mabalot, executive director of Visual Communications, reports that reduced funding primarily affects them by inhibiting growth in staff and production.

Susan Hoffman, executive director of California Confederation of the Arts (CCA), a nonprofit organization that advocates for the arts, says that although the current plan is better than Wilson's initial proposal, it has the same ideological thrust: privatize CAC. Indeed, the plan calls for the establishment of an Arts Fund to allow CAC to generate supplemental revenue from income-generating programs. The first such project is a special interest license plate. Beginning in March, California car owners can purchase an "arts license plate" designed by artist Wayne Thiebaud for an extra $20. CAC hopes to raise $2-million through the program. Other plans under discussion include sales of posters, lithographs, T-shirts, and coffee mugs with the Thiebaud design.

Julie Mackaman, development director at Film Arts Foundation, says the real issue is "a political and ideological question. What is the public's responsibility to nurture, support, and encourage the art that is not yet collected by museums—like multicultural arts? Especially in California with its demography, we need to have a vision of art that stands outside the marketplace."

But the philosophical argument is unlikely to gain converts in the crisis atmosphere of Sacramento. The Confederation is urging its 1,300 artist and organizational members to contact their legislators and ask that the Arts Council be treated like other general fund agencies that have been told to expect a 15 percent cut. CCA is also hoping that public support will be boosted by an Ad Council campaign designed for the National Cultural Alliance, which begins this spring and will promote the idea that the public gets something out of the tax dollars appropriated to the state humanities and arts councils. The most persuasive case to be made for government support, however, is the economic argument. Many legislators don't believe in the revenue-generating impact of public arts dollars, Hoffman says. "If we have a sustained conversation we can usually win people over, but some people would prefer not to know."

BARBARA OSBORN

Barbara Osborn is a Los Angeles-based journalist who writes about film, television, and technology.



The California Arts Council's "funding realignment plan" calls for a loss of two-thirds of CAC's 1991 funding over the next three years.

NATIVE AMERICAN PRODUCERS FORM ALLIANCE

The first Native American Producers Conference, held in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in November 1990, brought together film and television producers who shared concerns about the lack of Native American participation in productions about Native America. Subsequent gatherings in 1991, 1992, and during the Two Rivers and Deadwood Film Festivals in January 1993 have led to the creation of the Native American Producers Alliance, an organization committed to fostering



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The newly formed Native American Producers Alliance is headed by Ava Hamilton, director of the documentary *Everything Has a Spirit* (pictured).

Courtesy filmmaker

a new atmosphere of awareness that will provide more opportunities for Native American producers, directors, writers, technicians, and talent.

The alliance, currently in the midst of a membership drive, has members from over 15 tribal nations. Its coordinator is Ava Hamilton (Arapaho), an independent filmmaker from Boulder, Colorado, who recently completed a half-hour documentary *Everything Has a Spirit*.

"We are committed to the development of young talent, the strengthening of media services for Native producers, and the perpetuation of the tribal sovereignty," says Hamilton. "We see some individual Indians being given a few token jobs [in the industry], but not in key creative positions." She likens Hollywood's practices in the 1990s to treatymaking times in the mid-1800s when individual Indians were bought off with blankets in exchange for gold and land. The alliance, Hamilton adds, represents a united response to the irresponsible appropriation of tribal stories, ceremonies, and songs, and aims to ensure the integrity of the indigenous perspective.

The immediate goals of the alliance include raising money for a Native producers' conference in the fall of 1993, the Year of Indigenous Peoples, and raising the level of awareness regarding the exclusion of Native voices in the media.

Specifically, the alliance is concerned about the exclusion of experienced Indian producers and directors from a few national productions that address Native American issues. According to Hamilton, "these include two series projects underway, one by Turner Broadcasting and the other by Kevin Costner for CBS, as well as individually funded CPB documentaries and a documentary series [executive] produced by Robin Maw."

When contacted about her series, *Indian America*, Robin Cutler Maw stressed that her co-executive producer, Dave Warren, is from the Santa Clara Pueblo and that all of the nine-part series will be written and produced by teams of Indian professionals. The series, funded by the NEH in conjunction with at least three other foundations, focuses on the Makah Indian nation and shooting for the pilot will begin this August in Washington state.

Still, members of the alliance are out to put an end to the "blanket diplomacy" that major production companies and funding agencies now use to justify Native participation. By writing letters and arranging meetings with producers, the alliance hopes to address these issues and offer its assistance.

The formation of the alliance parallels a similar movement on an international level. At the Dreamspeakers Festival in September 1992 in Edmonton, Canada, the First Nations Film and Video World Alliance was created during meetings of indigenous peoples [see "Dreaming with Eyes Open: The First Nation's Dreamspeakers Festival," January/February 1993]. "We see our organization as the U.S. counterpart and hope to work on international collaborations," Hamilton says. "As independent Native American filmmakers, we have full appreciation of our value in the current media marketplace. We are brought together by the common goals of advocacy, creativity, and loyalty."

Future initiatives include developing media training and resources, promoting young talent, addressing copyright and intellectual property rights as they apply to tribes, and maximizing opportunities for Native American-initiated projects. The alliance seeks to network with interested individuals and organizations.

For more information, contact Ava Hamilton, coordinator, Native American Producers Membership, 6393 S. Boulder Rd, Boulder, CO 80303; (303) 494-8308.

MICHELLE YASMINE VALLADARES

Michelle Yasmine Valladares works and lives in New York City and San Francisco.

INDIES SEND REMINDERS TO VIDEOFINDERS

Some independent video producers and distributors recently forced the hand of PBS affiliate KCET in Los Angeles, causing the station to include their titles in a video locating service from which they had previously been excluded—although the service was advertised as comprehensive.

The flap began in September 1989 when KCET began advertising a service called VideoFinders, which urged viewers to call a 900-number to locate more than 70,000 video titles. The service promised: "If it's available, we can find it for you."

VideoFinders ran an ad in *Pipeline*, the newsletter of the Independent Media Distributors Alliance (IMDA). The ad asked independents to send in their catalogues. So, in February 1991, Ben Achtenberg, whose Boston-based Fanlight Productions specializes in videos for libraries and schools, did so. Achtenberg, an IMDA executive committee member, expected his titles to be listed—but they weren't.

Last fall, after being tipped off by a customer who had called VideoFinders but received no information on Fanlight titles, Achtenberg conducted some research of his own and found that none of Fanlight's titles, including *Code Gray: Ethical Dilemmas in Nursing*, which was nominated for an Academy Award, were listed, and listings for several other independents were either incorrect, incomplete, or omitted.

To make matters worse, operators on the line, who charge callers $2 for the first minute of information and $1 per minute thereafter, never let on that their files might be incomplete.

Achtenberg says he was concerned that the service was misleading callers. "The response we got from their operators was that anyone who was calling about films, if they were not listed, was given the impression that [the films] do not exist," he says.

Some calls by Achtenberg and others to KCET's director of distribution and licensing Dick Cook resulted in a partial change for the better.

After Achtenberg notified IMDA's members, whom he says number between 40 and 50 small- to medium-sized independent distributors, Cook was contacted by several independents wanting to have their videos listed. Cook says he's taken steps to accomodate the independents, including hiring someone for full-time data entry to add some 6,000 independent titles to the commercial database that makes up the bulk of his listings.

Cook says that bad publicity about 900-numbers in general has caused the volume of calls to VideoFinders to drop steadily over the past two years, and now the station plans to switch to a toll-free 800-number. (The bulk of revenues generated from the lines, he says, comes from the sale of the 200 or so tapes KCET distributes.) Under the new system, which Cook says is still being formulated, independents will pay KCET to have their titles added to the database.

Cook says in retrospect he would have changed the VideoFinders slogan to read: "If it's available we can *help you find it*."

Achtenberg, however, sees the whole episode

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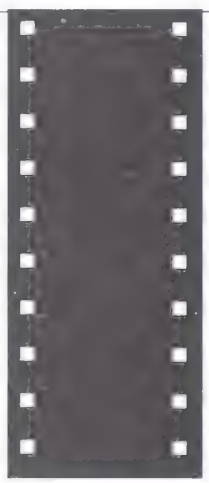
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While filming *Passin' It On*, director John Valadez experienced firsthand the police brutality that the subject of his documentary, Dhoruba Bin Wahad (center), was subjected to for many years.

Photo: Juliana Beasley, courtesy First Run Features

as representative of the way PBS has responded to budget cuts in recent years, establishing revenue-raising gimmicks that hurt independents who should be among PBS's natural constituency.

Producers and distributors interested in having their titles listed free of charge on KCET's database should call Dick Cook at (213) 953-5540.

TONY PALAZZO

Tony Palazzo writes for The Bergen Record *in New Jersey.*

PASSIN' IT ON DIRECTOR FILES CLAIM AGAINST NYPD

A year has passed since a series of riots and looting sprees broke out in South Central Los Angeles shortly after the verdict in the Rodney King trial was announced. Although word of the verdict, criticized by many as unjust, spread like a brushfire across the U.S. and overseas, few heard the story of a New York-based filmmaker who had his own run in with injustice on the same evening.

John Valadez, 27, has filed a $2-million claim against the New York Police Department (NYPD). Valadez says a police officer harrassed, assaulted, and falsely arrested him on the evening of May 1, 1992, while he was videotaping footage for possible use in *Passin' It On*, a documentary he directed about the rise of the Black Panther movement in the late 1960s.

"A big part of the film was about police brutality and I thought of incorporating the King verdict into it," Valadez says. "After the verdict was announced, there was such a feeling of tension in New York City," he recalls. "I rented a camera and headed downtown to see what I would find."

With his eye to the lens, Valadez captured images of a few overturned cars and some shattered store windows in lower Manhattan. He continued north to Broadway and Fourth Street, where rows of police officers stood within a barricaded area. According to Valadez's claim, an officer bumped into the filmmaker, knocking him down. Valadez's attorney, Ron Kuby, says the officer, later identified as Daniel Farkas, construed the incident as an assault and proceeded to pin the 5'4", 123-pound filmmaker to the ground, tie his hands behind his back, and confiscate his video camera. As Farkas arrested Valadez and led him to a nearby paddywagon, he bent the filmmaker's fingers back, causing them to swell.

"I was never read my rights or allowed to make a phone call," says Valadez, who is of Latino descent. "And if I would have been black, I'm not sure I would be alive today." The filmmaker was released from prison nearly 24 hours after the incident occurred.

One year later, all of the charges brought against the filmmaker, including harrassment, blocking traffic, and resisting arrest, have been dropped. The rented camera, however, has yet to be returned.

"Initially, all we wanted was a replacement camera and an apology," Kuby, a civil rights lawyer, says. But when repeated attempts failed, Kuby filed a claim with the city in July 1992. The claim requests $1-million in compensatory damages, which include physical and emotional trauma, assault, and harrassment, as well as $1-million in punative damages against Officer Farkas.

Kuby says that due to the mountain of police brutality cases in New York, the city usually chooses to settle claims rather than have the cases go to trial. "The going rate for one day of false imprisonment is around $10,000," he says, adding that he anticipates a response to the claim sometime around July 1993.

Valadez, who last May allegedly received a bitter taste of the brutality that many of his documentary subjects have encountered, now has greater concerns than the cash award he may eventually receive. "Ironically, a large part of *Passin' It On* deals with how the government and police can block the dissemination of information," he says. "The footage I got on that night will never be seen. Once again, the police succeeded."

MICHELE SHAPIRO

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of The Independent.

SEX IS... NOT FOR L.A. FILM LAB

A Los Angeles film lab's unstated company policy against transferring films with images deemed pornographic nearly cost two San Francisco producers a chance to premiere their documentary on gay male sexuality in the 1993 Berlin International Film Festival.

"There is sexually explicit material, but it's all done within context," explains San Francisco filmmaker Marc Huestis, director and coproducer, with Lawrence Helman, of *Sex Is...*, an 80-minute documentary on the meaning of sex and sexuality in the lives of gay men within the context of the AIDS crisis. Huestis, 38, is perhaps best known for *Coming of Age*, a film he describes as one of the first AIDS documentaries "with a gay voice," shown in over 30 film festivals.

"There's no gratuitous sex in *Sex Is...*," he continues. "It's all illustrating what people are talking about. For example, in a section about safer sex, when someone's talking about the need to re-eroticize the condom, there is a montage of images using condoms in oral sex, anal sex, masturbation.... To have somebody sit and talk about it is really different than to have somebody discuss it and then to see these really vital, wonderful images of men having sex with condoms."

Helman, who is making his producing debut with *Sex Is...*, explains that throughout the documentary are four-second shots—totalling less than a minute of screen time—from old male porno films which were left "very archival-looking, scratched and discolored" to illustrate discussions of intimacy, relationships, pornography, gender, race, and a host of other issues relating to the lives of gay men.

After six months of negotiating the details of a three-color separation, tape-to-16mm film transfer of *Sex Is...* with Image Transform, a 20-year-



Gay sex is verboten at Image Transform, an L.A. lab that turned away *Sex Is...* due to its sexually explicit content.

Photo: Daniel Nicoletta, courtesy filmmakers

old film lab in L.A., the filmmakers learned from company vice president Robert Bailey on the day of the transfer that certain scenes were found to be "objectionable" and that the $12,000 job was being turned down.

"Our company policy is that we do not show any penile erections or insertions of any kind," Bailey said, repeating the phrase six times during a terse, eight-minute phone interview from his L.A. office. "The company's policy is very clear on this," he added. Asked whether that policy was written down anywhere or had been communicated to the filmmakers before the day of the transfer, Bailey faltered, "That's our internal company opinion... no... I'm not going to answer that question."

The filmmakers say the policy was "never discussed" up to and including the day Helman brought the work into the lab. "It came as this huge blow to my solar plexus," Helman, 37, recalls. "I didn't know where these people were coming from." Helman said he was told by Bailey that certain scenes would be offensive to employees who were Born Again Christians and to several women in the lab, a statement Bailey denies making. "Their bottom line," says Helman, "was, re-cut it; if we like what you've done, we'll transfer it."

With less than two weeks before the Berlin International Film Festival, the panicked filmmakers began the search for a lab that could do a high-quality component transfer comparable to Image Transform's. Three of the four labs recommended by Bailey were either unwilling or unable to do the job. A fourth allowed scenes of female—but no male—frontal nudity.

A frantic 24 hours after Image Transform turned down *Sex Is...*, Helman was shipping the master to Film Craft, a lab in Detroit, Michigan, which screened the project and initially said it would have to "pass" on doing the transfer.

"I felt like Lenny Bruce," Helman remembers. "I couldn't believe this was going on, especially in towns where porn is so open, so available. The dichotomy to me seemed so incongruous."

The filmmakers deluged the Detroit lab with lists of their sponsors and advisors and with press material on the film, trying to change the owner's mind. Film Craft reluctantly agreed to do the job after receiving a phone call from Linda Hansen of the New York Foundation for the Arts, who vouched for the film and the filmmakers' character. When Helman picked up the film, he discovered that the lab, which had originally asked not to have its name associated with *Sex Is...*, had a change of heart and had attached their academy leader, with the company's name and phone number, to the finished product.

Helman says he hoped that publicizing the incident would not distract audiences from the serious issues tackled by the documentary, which will be shown the week of May 21 at the Castro Theater in San Francisco. "It's much more important that filmmakers know that [Image Transfer], which thinks it has a monopoly on this process, is calling what people can or cannot put in their films," says Helman. "That's completely out of line."

JANICE DRICKEY

Janice Drickey is a writer living in northern California.

POLISH TV SEEKS WESTERN PRODUCT

Poland, long considered a stagnant backwater of the entertainment industry, is rapidly coming to life. Last year 100 films were shot there, including many foreign productions. This year mega-director Steven Spielberg, driven away by demonstrations from his original plan to shoot *Schindler's List* in Auschwitz, plans to film in and around Warsaw. Most important, by mid-summer the state's government monopoly of television will be history.

There are now two national channels in Poland, both of which are controlled by the government. There is also a third licensed channel, Echo, which airs in southwest Poland, and Polsat, which transmits in Polish via satellite from Holland. Although the state forbids other broadcasts, they exist in the form of "pirates": illegal channels that transmit tapes which have not been paid for on local frequencies. Due to the lack of hard currency throughout Eastern Europe, pirating is common practice.

To resolve this chaotic state of affairs, the Polish government decided recently to end its monopoly. A new broadcasting bill has been passed, giving any interested parties until July 1, 1993, to file for a license. The Radio and Television Communication Agency will then award frequencies. These will be legal and subsidized by advertisers.

Among the many companies vying for control of the several new independent channels is Arathos, an independent Polish production and distribution company. Artur Dela, president of Arathos, spoke to *The Independent* at the Monte Carlo T.V. Market about future plans for his cable channel, ATV, which has since received a thumbs up from the Polish government.

By contacting European and U.S. independents as well as the majors and offering coproduction and other financial incentives, Dela hopes to achieve a varied and contemporary programming mix. He is looking now primarily for arthouse films from both Europe and the U.S.

For independent film- and videomakers interested in working on projects in Poland, ATV could be a dream come true. "I would be happy to represent them in Eastern Europe," Dela says. "I am interested in coproducing and cofinancing

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with foreign filmmakers and am willing to put up half the budget on condition that the films are shot in Poland using our studios and our technicians." Dela adds that production costs in his country are one quarter of those in the States or Western Europe.

Much of Arathos' income comes from producing animated series for television. Dela is also trying to entice Western distributors into investing in Eastern European theatrical distribution by collaborating with him in the purchase of a dozen Polish cinemas in which to show independent films.

Arathos currently distributes several films dubbed in Polish, including all of Spanish director Carlos Saura's works. But he is interested in acquiring new product, particularly with a view to programming the new Polish channel. "My ambition," Dela concludes,"is to uphold the great creative potential existing in Poland today."

Those interested in contacting Artur Dela should write to him at: Arathos, 47 rue de Babylone, 75007 Paris, France. tel: 33-45-55-2840.

PAULITA SEDGEWICK

Paulita Sedgewick is a London-based filmmaker who is in the process of selling her first feature film, Blackout.

CULTURAL WATCHDOG UNLEASHED

In the 1950s George Gerbner, a communications professor at the University of Pennsylvania, started noticing a trend: most of the narrative fabric of a community's life was determined by the mass media. Children no longer related stories told by grandparents, churches, or even their own parents with the same degree of fluency as they related stories that were coming at them from television and the mass media. After studying and writing for 40 years about what he felt was an escalating trend, Gerbner became compelled to do something as a citizen.

In 1990 Gerbner formed the Cultural Environment Movement (C.E.M.). Its directive: "To stop the homogenization of the mass-produced and marketing-driven media environment." Since then Gerbner has enlisted the support of many existing media awareness organizations both in the States and abroad. Participating groups include the Center for Media Education in Washington, DC, the Institute for Global Communications in San Francisco, the Institute of the Social Communication Sciences in Rome, and the International Association of Mass Communication Research in the Netherlands, as well as a range of smaller, community-inspired grassroots organizations.

"The beauty of Gerbner's vision for the movement is that it is so inclusive," says Kay Weldon, who has recently merged her 100-member community group, Message to the Media, with C.E.M. and has also become C.E.M.'s secretary. "Gerbner invites and encourages members of the industry to join," says Weldon. "He believes that everyone in all fields and walks of life needs to be part of the dialogue."

Gerbner says that film- and videomakers, more than any other group, are being pressed into best-selling formulas. This, he adds, is a central problem that his group is trying to address.

If it all sounds a bit broad and far-reaching, in truth it is. Gerbner's message could hardly be termed precise. His vision seems to extend across the entire gamut of human existence. He can list countless examples of what he says are "damaging, demeaning, and discriminating" messages that the mass media is propagating—violence against children and ethnic groups in television, sexist ads that run in magazines, cigarette advertising that helps to kill thousands, movies with gay bashing tendencies...

Gerbner says he wants to build a constituency that includes independent film- and videomakers because they are often aware of the mass media's shorthcomings.

Weldon's own concerns about the role of the media began when she worked as a mental health nurse for Delaware's Guidance Services for Children and Youth. "I became aware that kids were listening to new voices," Weldon says. "The commercial pop culture had given these kids distorted world views. I grew concerned that these children would have no thoughtful, mature models to turn to for guidance."

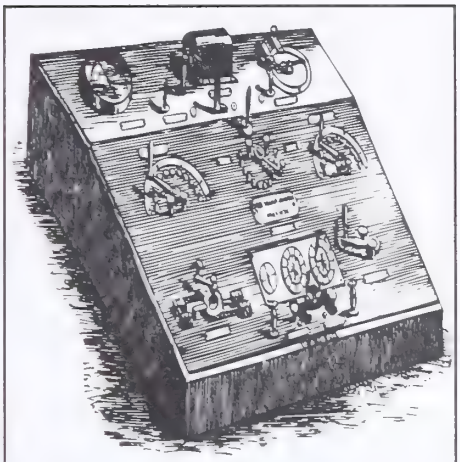
Imagine the scene in the movie *Network*, in which anchorman Peter Finch encourages everyone watching his show to go to their windows and scream out, "I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it anymore," and you'll have some idea of C.E.M.'s ultimate goal. "I somehow believe the CEO's of major global communications corporations will hear us and begin to weigh the gains of Wall Street against cultural disaster," says Gerbner.

The exact means by which Gerbner and C.E.M. plan to affect change in the media industry is, at this time, rather sketchy. C.E.M. is beginning to plan a large-scale conference in Washington, DC, which will take place in two years, where concerned individuals can gather to discuss media awareness. The organization also hopes to obtain funds through private donations to begin putting out a newsletter. Weldon is certainly no novice to the difficulties of fundraising. "Message to the Media had to be run out of my home. We never had any real money. Even though people are interested and aware, it's difficult to get them to give," she says. "C.E.M. needs a more formal structure, a financial support group. Seed money." In other words, C.E.M.'s survival depends on a large infusion of folding green.

Those interested in contributing to or learning more about the organization should contact George Gerbner at (215) 898-6776.

WENDY DETERMAN

Wendy Determan writes frequently on arts and culture for publications including Details, Allure, *and the* Village Voice.



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Robert Rodriguez

D I R E C T O R

El Mariachi

He has none of the traditional Hollywood trappings. Austin filmmaker Robert Rodriguez, 24, is very savvy about the fickle, one-minute-you're-hot, the-next-minute-you're-not nature of the film business. He had his first brush with fame a few years ago, when he won numerous awards for one of his short films. Despite the accolades, Rodriguez remained unsure of his ability to make decent feature-length films. And he had no funding. So the young director and Carlos Gallardo, a friend since their junior seminary boarding school days, devised a plan: they'd sink a couple thousand dollars into a practice film and sell it directly to the Spanish home video market. Working this way, they'd be able to make films in relative obscurity until they were good enough to emerge out of nowhere and sidestep the very public learning curve many young filmmakers have to endure.

Their first practice film turned out to be *El Mariachi*, a quirky, mistaken-identity adventure about a naive guitar player who arrives in a small Mexican town at the same time as a hit man—who also is carrying a guitar case. A cross between *Quick Draw McGraw* and *Mad Max*, the Spanish-language film won this year's Audience Award at Sundance. It also snagged Rodriguez a two-year writing/directing contract with Columbia, which released it theatrically in February. Rodriguez holds up the film, made for only $7,000, as an example of the creative challenges and benefits of low-budget filmmaking.

To finance the film, Gallardo, who played the mariachi, sold some land his father left him in Mexico. Rodriguez himself wasn't exactly rolling in saleable commodities. The son of a nurse and a door-to-door cookware salesman and one of 10 children, he was still a film student at the University of Texas at Austin. To raise money, he checked into an Austin-based pharmaceutical testing program.

One month later he walked out with $3,000, lower cholesterol, and a finished screenplay, completed during the spare time between tests. To keep costs down, he'd developed the script around things he already had at hand. "If I wrote in a helicopter, I'd have to find a helicopter," Rodriguez explains, "But Carlos had a great pit bull, and we had a school bus, a motorcycle, two cars, and a ranch. So I wrote the script around them."



Courtesy Columbia Pictures

Rodriguez also wrote the script around the guy in the bunk next to him at the research center, who became the bad-guy gringo. "We were both a little down on our luck," Rodriguez admits. "Everyone has their big dreams about what they're going to do when they walk out of the hospital. When we told people that we were going to make a movie, they all said, 'Yeah, right.'"

Nothing else about the film came easily either. Like the fact that the research center roommate (who, like the rest of the cast, had never acted before) spoke no Spanish and had to be fed his lines phonetically before each take. Or that Gallardo, the mariachi, couldn't sing *or* play the guitar. Or that they couldn't afford to rent a dolly, so they had to borrow a wheelchair from a neighboring hospital (and get it back in time for an incoming patient).

The Arriflex camera Rodriguez borrowed was so old and noisy he was forced to shoot the entire film without sound and overdub the dialog with a microphone bought from Radio Shack. The overdubbing in turn resulted in problems with the synching of the dialog. Necessity led to solutions like pressing the pit bull into service as an extra for some reaction shots. On top of all that, he only had two 250 watt lights (the kind construction workers use) to light his makeshift sets. "Well," Rodriguez laughs, "that's why there's the low-key, moody lighting."

Rodriguez's laid-back attitude about his filmmaking war stories reflects his less-is-more philosophy: "I heard Martin Scorsese say that making a movie is a terrible experience," he muses, "because all day people are asking you thousands of questions, from 'Should this be black or blue?' to 'What do you want for lunch?' to 'Where should I put the camera?' and you can't even think. But since I *was* the crew, I didn't have anyone asking me anything. I was able to concentrate on everything from the costume changes to what I had shot four or five days before and keep it all in my head. Working that way makes you very decisive. Without all those people around, you just go and get the shot—creatively, your mind works very fast. If you can keep up with it physically, you can come up with some really good stuff."

ELIZABETH LARSEN

Elizabeth Larsen is associate editor of Utne Reader *and a freelance writer.*

Ang Lee

D I R E C T O R

The Wedding Banquet

Blink and you could miss him. Ang Lee's cameo appearance in *The Wedding Banquet* is fleeting. But when, as one of hundreds of merrymakers who attend the film's pivotal banquet scene, he

remarks between sips of rice wine that the boisterious atmosphere reflects 5,000 years of sexual repression, Lee captures the essence of his first full-length feature in a single sentence.

"All emotions that the Chinese don't usually show come out at these banquets," the Taiwanese-born director explained from the V.I.P. Press Lounge at the Berlin International Film Festival, where in February *The Wedding Banquet*, a coproduction of Taiwan's Central Motion Pictures and New York-based Good Machine Productions, competed against 24 features for the festival's highest honor: the Golden Bear. Unfazed by the buzz surrounding his film's world premiere, Lee, 40, dressed in a sports jacket, tie, and cotton trousers, remained unassuming and softspoken as the members of his cast looked on from a nearby table.



Courtesy filmmaker

"The banquets provide a mixture of absurdity, comedy, and touching moments," the director, a 1984 graduate of New York University's Tisch School of the Arts, continued. The festival's jury must have thought the rest of the film did, too. The distinguished panel awarded *The Wedding Banquet* one of two Golden Bears given out at this year's ceremony. In what many have dubbed "The Year of the Far East," Lee's picture shared the honor with another Chinese film, Xie Fei's *The Woman from the Lake of Scented Souls*.

Filmed entirely in New York City, *The Wedding Banquet* centers on Taiwanese-born Wai-Tung Gao, a shrewd real estate investor and American citizen who would live happily ever after in Manhattan with his lover, Simon, if only his parents back in Taiwan would get off his case about marrying a nice Chinese woman and giving them a grandchild. To put an end to their nagging, Simon comes up with a solution: Wai-Tung should marry Wei-Wei, a young tenant who is behind on her rent and desperate for a green card. No one, however, anticipates the weight of Chinese tradition in such matters, and when Wai Tung's parents head to New York for the wedding celebration, the white lie evolves into a full-fledged farce.

Since the script, which Lee cowrote with Neil Feng and James Schamus, deals so sensitively with the main characters' gay relationship, some may be surprised that Lee, who lives in the Manhattan suburb of White Plains with his wife and two children, is not gay. The idea for the script, said Lee, came more than six years ago from a friend. "At the time, I didn't think there was enough interesting material for a feature film," said Lee. So in the meantime, he wrote and directed *Pushing Hands*, a 90-minute feature about a Tai Chi master in search of self respect. The film won three Golden Horse Awards in Taiwan, including a special jury prize for Lee's direction. "But when it hit me, I wrote *The Wedding Banquet* script very quickly."

Of the gay subject matter, Lee said: "A lot of people warned me I was walking on a mine field. But the more I worked with the actors, the more I started to believe in the love and common emotions [the characters] shared. By the time we shot the film, I was totally comfortable." Apparently the Taiwanese Censorship Bureau approved of Lee's sensitive handling; it gave the film a PG rating, which Lee considers "a big step" for a country where "there is no history of guys kissing on the screen."

Some of the film's funniest moments, however, are autobiographical, such as the scene in which Wao-Tung and Wei-Wei opt for a shotgun wedding at City Hall over a formal ceremony. "Two weeks before my wedding I was still shooting my thesis film at NYU," Lee recalled. "Everyone in both our familes had big weddings except us. It was a shame. Such a shame."

Subject matter aside, the director took a big risk by casting Winston Chao, an airline steward and model who had never acted in a film before, as Wao-Tung. Lee, himself an actor-turned-director who received a B.F.A. in theater from the University of Illinois after moving to the U.S. in 1978,

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admitted his choices were limited: "It's hard to find a good actor who is charming, speaks English and Mandarin Chinese, and doesn't mind portraying a gay character."

Because the film's under $1-million budget was less than one-fortieth the cost of some of its Berlin competitors, including *Malcolm X* and *Hoffa*, Lee had to be creative when selecting locations: with the help of a few umbrella-skewered tables, a public pier was transformed into a chic outdoor eatery, and the luxurious wedding night hotel suite was really a dolled-up meeting hall at the Church of Unification.

Lee also enlisted the support of Manhattan's Chinese community, which supplied everything from food and costumes to hundreds of extras for the banquet scene. In exchange, Lee agreed to serve as a judge at the annual Miss Chinatown pageant. "It was far more difficult than directing," Lee quipped.

The director's next project, a film about a famous chef and his three daughters, will take him to Taipei. Although both *Pushing Hands* and *The Wedding Banquet* won national script competitions in Taiwan, Lee said he will be relieved to direct someone else's work. "Writing is tough," he added. "I would much rather concentrate on directing."

MICHELE SHAPIRO



Courtesy videomaker

Gary Rhine

P R O D U C E R

Native American Relations

Gary Rhine, a Jewish San Franciscan who once made his living publishing books, now spends his time working closely with the Native American spiritual movement. As head of Kifaru Productions, he produced the award-winning documentary *Wiping the Tears of Seven Generations* (1992) and *Peyote Road* (1993), both codirected by Yaqui/Cheyenne filmmaker Fidel Moreno. These two videos kick off a six-part series Rhine is producing that focuses on American Indian issues.

Wiping the Tears of Seven Generations, Rhine's first collaboration with the Lakota, tells the story of the Bigfoot Memorial Ride of 1990. In the middle of a South Dakota winter when temperatures reached - 80°, 300 Lakota riders retraced the path taken by Chief Bigfoot and his band in the days preceding the Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890 and the conquest of the Lakota by the U.S. Army. The memorial ride brought the Lakota nation out of a century of mourning and announced to the Western world that the Lakota culture had survived.

Rhine, who was old friends with a number of Indian activists, first became involved in *Wiping the Tears* after he was asked by Alex Whiteplume and Arvol Lookinghorse, organizers of the Memorial Ride, to come along and videotape the event. When he returned to San Francisco with piles of footage, Rhine was put in touch with Fidel Moreno, who had interviewed the members of the Wounded Knee Survivors' Association. Moreno and Rhine decided to combine their efforts. "Basically, as a non-Indian," says Rhine, "the best I could hope for was to be an accurate vehicle to tell someone else's story—to make it so the filmmaker is transparent."

Moreno and Rhine worked collaboratively with their subjects. During preproduction, Rhine circulated his script to a dozen Lakota leaders, asking for feedback. Again during postproduction, the rough-cut was circulated for comments to all participants. Both Moreno and Rhine had renounced release forms on the assumption that they would show interviewees the rough edit and ask them if they'd been fairly represented. They did a fair amount of reediting as a result.

In keeping with the Lakota oral tradition in which elders pass on the tribal stories, Rhine and Moreno asked a grandmother in her sixties, Hannah Left-Hand Bull Fixico, to narrate *Wiping the Tears*. "When the Lakota sit down and listen to their grandmothers," Rhine explains, "nobody has the slickness of professional actors." Ironically, PBS rejected the documentary on the grounds that "the narration is not up to national broadcast standards." As Rhine noted, "It sounds like they would have only been willing to air the program if the narrator had a British accent." Rhine and Moreno were vindicated when the Disney Channel and its subsidiary, the Canadian Family Channel, bought the piece for a series on American history.

Wiping the Tears was followed by *Peyote Road*, which looks at the use of the peyote cactus in a Native American Church ceremony. For many years, the 300,000-member Church had an understanding with the Federal Drug Administration that, in accordance with the American Indian Religious Freedom Act (AIRFA), natives would be free to use peyote in purification rituals despite its hallucinogenic properties. The video recounts how the State of Oregon successfully challenged AIRFA in a Supreme Court case on the grounds of "compelling State interest." According to the ruling, U.S. criminal law against the use of hallucinogenics takes precedence over the religious freedoms protected by the First Amendment. Produced in collaboration with Native religious freedom movement leaders, the video seeks to challenge the Supreme Court's view by describing the use of peyote from a Native perspective. Lobbyists have taken a 15-minute version to Capitol Hill to educate Congress about AIRFA.

Rhine is currently in preproduction on *Red Road to Sobriety*, which will be codirected by Chante Pierce (Cherokee/Cheyenne). The program will examine how the Native American sobriety movement is blending the techniques of Alcoholics Anonymous with Indian spiritual rituals. Next will be a history of U.S. treaties with the Native nations and how a Congressional proposal to abdicate those treaties in 1978 led to the largest Pan-American protest in history: the Longest Walk, in which hundreds of Native leaders walked from Oakland, California, to Washington, DC.

Rhine hopes to complete the series by the end of 1994. In the meantime, he's self-distributing the completed works. At this time, there is no television deal for *Peyote Road*. "It may be a little too controversial for mainstream TV," he says.

Rhine takes care to distinguish his series from the $10-million extravaganza on Indian history that Kevin Costner is putting together for CBS. "Costner's series stops at the Wounded Knee

Massacre," he points out. "Contemporary programs like that leave Native cultures dead in the last century. They allow us to treat Indians like cartoons and keep up our sports teams with names like the Washington Redskins. All our programs deal with contemporary issues, because we see Indian culture as vital and alive today. We've tried from the outset to make our productions represent the Indian people."

CHRISTOPHER DAVIDSON

Christopher Davidson lives in New York and writes about film and education.

Zhang Yimou

D I R E C T O R

The Story of Qui Ju

"In the past, Chinese films were too much the handmaiden of politics," insists Zhang Yimou, who at age 42 has become the most famous and highly regarded of China's Fifth Generation filmmakers. "Younger filmmakers like myself want to put aside that role for films. We really want films to be works of art and not instruments of political propaganda."

Zhang's historical dramas *Red Sorghum* (1988), *Ju Dou* (1990), and *Raise the Red Lantern* (1991)—all tales of women struggling against their proscribed social and domestic roles in China's strict patriarchal and feudal society—are aesthetically breathtaking. Initially trained as a cinematographer, Zhang deploys a formal classicism in his compositions that restrains the smoldering emotions and sensuality of his characters.

Zhang's latest work, *The Story of Qui Ju* (1992), couldn't be more different. "It's a new departure, with a new theme and new style," he readily admits through a translator. "The film was inspired by true peasants in China." Zhang knows the countryside well, having spent 10 years during the Cultural Revolution in the stark, remote province of Shaanxi, where *Qui Ju* was shot. "I opted for a different approach, because the simplicity of peasants moves me. I wanted no embellishments. I wanted to portray the life of the peasant in a very naturalistic, realistic way."

While not political in the social realist sense, the Hong Kong-financed *Qui Ju* is Zhang's first film to directly address life in contemporary China. The story follows a pregnant farmer named Qui Ju as she attempts to seek justice for her husband after he is kicked in the groin by the village chief and rendered impotent. She would be content with an honest apology, but the arbitrator decides on a cash settlement. When Qui Ju comes to collect, the village chief throws the money on the ground in a display of contempt. "For each one you pick up," he declares, "you bow your head to me."

Qui Ju storms off and begins her series of appeals which lead her up the judicial ladder. The story's tension lies in the discrepancy between Qui Ju's idea of "what is right" and that of the justice system. "They're not on parallel tracks," observes Zhang. "She wants one thing, but the legal system is moving in another direction." In the film's denouement when justice is served, "there's a puzzled expression on her face. The whole system has gone off in its own direction, and she's baffled by the outcome. There's something very Chinese in that," says Zhang, smiling.

Qui Ju's naturalism springs from its quasi-documentary approach. Zhang employed only four professional actors. The rest are ordinary people playing themselves—villagers, lawyers, cadres, and judges. In addition, many scenes were shot using hidden cameras. Chinese are caught unaware on the crowded streets or inside a provin-



Courtesy filmmaker

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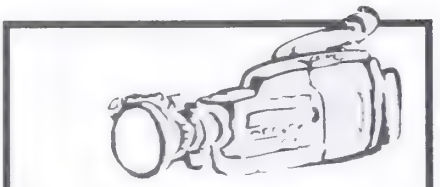
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cial legal office, where we see squabbling neighbors argue before an arbitrator. A young couple applying for a marriage license giggles self-consciously as the cadre tries to determine whether theirs is an arranged marriage.

"These were actual people having those discussions," Zhang recalls. "We put up an old wooden crate days before, so they'd get used to it. Then at some point the cinematographer would climb into the box. There's a little hole he'd shoot through. We also hid the microphones in places people wouldn't notice, like a stove-pipe. We didn't tell the cadres when we'd be shooting. Their instruction was, 'Don't pay attention to us; just do what you usually do.'"

One of the most fascinating portraits in *Qui Ju* is that of the legal system itself, which operates quite differently in the country and city. The peasants have neither courts nor formal written laws. Their judicial system is still based on the family and how it resolves conflicts. "In a countryside village," Zhang explains, "if two people have a problem, they're called together and sit around a little stove where it's nice and warm, and each person speaks their side. A mediator then says, 'You do this and that, you pay him so much money,' and it's all fixed." He continues, "In the city, it becomes much more formal, where you have a lawyer and go to court." But, Zhang adds, "this story really isn't about Chinese law; it's about an individual who is searching for people to respect her."

Chinese women, who have adored the roles played by lead actress Gong Li in Zhang's earlier films, seem to like this headstrong character even better, the director says. But it's only recently that Chinese audiences have gotten familiar with Zhang's body of work. Both *Ju Dou* and *Red Lantern* were banned by the government. When the ban was lifted, 10,000 people showed up for *Ju Dou*'s opening in Shanghai. The overwhelming response leaves the director visibly gratified. He recalls, "There was an article by a theater manager who said attendance for these two films saved his theater."

While Zhang now has an easier time with exhibition, he still has to jump through the hoops of story censorship. On this point, it makes no difference whether his films are produced in or outside the Chinese studio system. Foreign capital can raise production values, but all scripts must go through the same approval system. "Even the foreign production companies have to negotiate with the Chinese government," says Zhang. The changes requested are often too integral to the story to bother with a rewrite. Zhang recalls one of his scripts being rejected because it was "too grim."

At the moment, Zhang is enjoying a respite from official disapproval. Two years ago, Chinese officials tried to yank *Ju Dou* from the Academy Awards competition. This year, in a complete turnabout, they submitted *Qui Ju* for consideration. Political officials also reportedly attended the party for *Qui Ju* at the Venice Film Festival. "Honestly, I don't understand it," Zhang says of this change. "It's a better situation than last year; it is becoming more liberal. I hope this will continue. Only in a liberal atmosphere can good films be made."

PATRICIA THOMSON



I.R.S. Releasing

D I S T R I B U T O R

Miramax and New Line/Fine Line, companies that have long commanded attention as the leading producers and distributors of independent film, must now share the spotlight with a third contender: I.R.S. Media, the parent corporation of I.R.S. Productions and I.R.S. Releasing and the offspring of Miles Copeland and Paul Colichman, the pair who brought you I.R.S. Records. If you remember, I.R.S. was probably *the* leading indie record label in the 1980s, with artists like Police, R.E.M., and Fine Young Cannibals.

After a string of small pictures, I.R.S. got noticed in a big way last year with its release of Allison Anders' *Gas, Food, and Lodging*. There was also the very off-beat *One False Move*, directed by Carl Franklin and produced by Colichman, and Stacy Cochran's much lauded *My New Gun*. I.R.S.'s latest projects are the just-wrapped *Bankrobber*, by first-time British director Nick Mead, and *The Music of Chance*, the first dramatic feature directed by veteran documentarian Philip Haas. *Chance*, which Colichman describes as "an existential art movie," premiered at this year's New Directors/New Films festival in March and will open theatrically in mid-spring.

Colichman, I.R.S.'s president, is an enthusiastic Angeleno who got his start at a young age

producing the *Joan Rivers Show* for Fox Television. After a number of years in the recording business, he and Copeland, hungering for a new challenge, launched I.R.S. Productions in 1987. "As we did with the record company, we started out not risking a lot of money, but taking some great creative risks," Colichman relates. "Some paid off, some didn't. We grew, we created a niche, and over time we've become, really, the noted production/distribution company in lower-budget, quality American independent films."

Colichman has already produced 22 features with I.R.S., 15 of them by first-time directors. These days I.R.S. is knocking off an average of six to seven pictures a year, all with budgets between $1.5- and $2.5-million. No script development is done at I.R.S., which has offices in Los Angeles, New York, and London. Most screenplays come through a manager, agent, or lawyer, says Colichman, or from "people who are really persistent."

How does I.R.S. go about recruiting directors? "How don't we?" Colichman wonders good-naturedly. "We have our spies, we go to every film school in the country, we attend every film festival possible. We take a lot of first-time directors based on screenplays that are submitted to us." As for Carl Franklin, whom Colichman recruited to shoot *One False Move*, "We were interested in a black director for the project. We looked to see who was out there, and there weren't a lot of candidates, unfortunately.... Carl had actually done a couple of films for Roger [Corman], and they show he has talent, even on Roger's ridiculous budgets. For somebody who's career building, we like it when directing a film for us is a step up."

After a few years, I.R.S.'s distribution division grew out of its production activities. Executive vice president Seth Willenson says, "Our movies are unique in regard to style and purpose. They're smaller and edgier, and so the company ultimately felt it had to get involved in controlling its own destiny and the distribution of its movies." Thus I.R.S. Releasing was created in 1991.

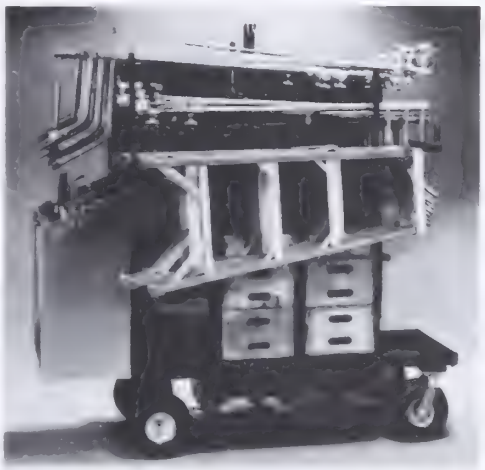
Although the company primarily tends to release its own films, I.R.S. is occasionally interested in distributing other low-budget projects. "We're production-oriented, not acquisition-oriented," explains Colichman. "If I see a film that I think is really special, I will acquire it because I love it, but not for business reasons." He expressed some interest in ready-made documentary projects and stresses that good scripts break the rules. "I want films with an edge, with something to say. They can be of any genre; we're very open. Some will be extraordinarily artistic—*The Music of Chance* is one of them; some will be more commercial and mainstream. But all have something special going for them."

Says Lilli Rouleau, I.R.S.'s director of creative affairs, "We're not competing with studios, we're making films that people want to see in America that they can't get from cable, or just general video schlock, or the studios. Classic American cinema." Rouleau, who receives an average of 50 to 60 scripts a week, continues, "We're fighting the

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fight, doing the independent thing. We like to work with people who have a philosophy similar to ours, not people who try to get their films made for $40-million at a studio and can't, then come here and say, 'I'll make it for $2-million.' It never works out. They have to have an independent mind, they have to want to make their picture for $2-million, because some pictures turn out better that way."

JORDAN ELGRABLY

Jordan Elgrably is a repentant film critic who has written for the International Herald Tribune, Liberation, El País, *and the* L.A. Times, *and wrote and produced the short film* Aberration.

Emile Fallaux

FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

Rotterdam Film Festival

Interviewing Emile Fallaux, now in his second year as director of the Rotterdam Film Festival, is no light chore. He is a politically enlightened, no-nonsense Dutch documentarian and journalist who has always eschewed glibness for such heavy subject matter as the CIA. His manner is direct and rational, he deflects attention from his own accomplishments, and he is always on top of the question.

Fallaux's progressive politics colored every aspect of this year's festival (January 28 to February 7), its 22nd incarnation since it was founded by the late Hubert Bals in 1972. "I mistrust consensus in any form," Fallaux says. "We try to have as many voices as possible in the festival." He initiated the section "Limits of Liberty," comprising films made under threat of censorship in various parts of the world, which this year included *Children of Fate* from the U.S. From this, the foundation FilmFree emerged. Fallaux envisioned FilmFree's task as one of overseeing human rights violations against filmmakers. Being too large a problem for the festival to handle alone, he successfully enlisted the aid of PEN, the international literary writers' association, and FIPRESCI, the international film critics' organization. The board of Human Rights Watch, however, turned down his proposal. Then in early February, Fallaux discovered that Human Rights Watch had inaugurated such a program, "but without including us." It is a measure of his strength and conviction that he adds, "It doesn't matter, as long as it happens."

Less a man of spectacle than of substance, Fallaux extends his commitment to cinema far beyond the mere projection of 180 features and numerous shorts for a festival audience; he believes in activism through aiding production and promotion. He is continuing the Hubert Bals Fund and CineMart, both initiated by his predecessor Marco Mueller. The Bals Fund provides financing based on need for script development, production, and distribution, but only to filmmakers in developing countries; U.S. minorities are ineligible. ("I would be for it. I started a campaign to send food to famished minorities in the U.S. when Reagan and Charlton Heston were urging Americans to send food to Poland in the early eighties.") CineMart, under the direction of Wouter Barendrecht and Janette Kolkema, is an informal meeting venue and coproduction forum that occurs during the festival. It offers to representatives of 40 preselected film projects from all over the world, including the U.S., an opportunity to network with 300 directors, producers, distributors, bankers, and TV network scouts.

Fallaux's anti-consensus stance has been formed in part by his unusual assortment of life experiences. Now 48, he left his native Leiden to



Photo: Folkert Helmus, courtesy Rotterdam Film Festival

study theatrical direction, then got involved with the Living Theater during his "acid period" in the early 1960s. (Artaud's Theater of Cruelty was "my hangup at the time.") Subsequently as a journalist, he covered conflicts in Southeast Asia, Central America, and North Africa.

Fallaux has programmed a number of comedies from Egypt and Iran, and a high percentage of Bals Fund recipients are from Islamic nations. This support is in part Fallaux's response to his perception that "there is no room for deviant thought in now fundamentalist Islamic countries."

The conformism is much more global, however. "The American film circus keeps turning," Fallaux writes in the festival catalog, "immune to what is happening outside the amusement factories." Rotterdam is traditionally a showcase for independent American productions; "a small film can drown in Berlin," he observes. Fallaux personally selects the films, based on his two trips a year to the U.S. (his second home). Plus, he relies on unofficial suggestions from unpaid contacts like producer James Schamus and publicist Wendy Braitman. ("They plug their friends, of course, but that's all right.") This year he took *Children of Fate: Life and Death in a Sicilian Family* (Andrew Young, Susan Todd, and Robert M. Young) and the then work-in-progress *The Genius* (Joe Gibbons) from the Independent Feature Film Market. *Laws of Gravity* (Nick Gomez) was promised to the festival, but a sales agent nixed it in favor of Berlin, which demanded an exclusive. Fallaux is particularly fond of two U.S. independents he presented, Mark D'Auria's *Smoke* and Tobias Meinecke's *The Contenders*.

Although the noncompetitive Rotterdam Festival may sound on the surface too politically correct—by current American standards anyway—it is, like Fallaux, a sincere continuation of the liberal Dutch social tradition and, moreover, never boring. Retrospectives this year included Abel Ferrara and Michael Haneke; the Extravaganza section mounted what the catalog calls "fine examples of bad taste," like *Man Bites Dog*, *Hard-Boiled*, and *Dead Alive/Braindead*; and regional specialists scoped out titles from remote parts of the globe for the Main Program.

Fallaux, ever the earnest reporter, has always foregone ennui for dangerous living. When, however, he feared for his life on the streets of the East Village in the seventies while reporting on the CIA ("they are lunatics"), he very nearly capitulated to a different type of journalism. "I thought I should quit," he muses, "and go interview Susan Sontag or something like that."

Film Festival Rotterdam, Box 21696, 3001 AR Rotterdam, The Netherlands; tel: (31) (10) 4118080; fax: (31) (10) 4135132. Application deadline for 1994 festival: December 1; for CineMart: October 1.

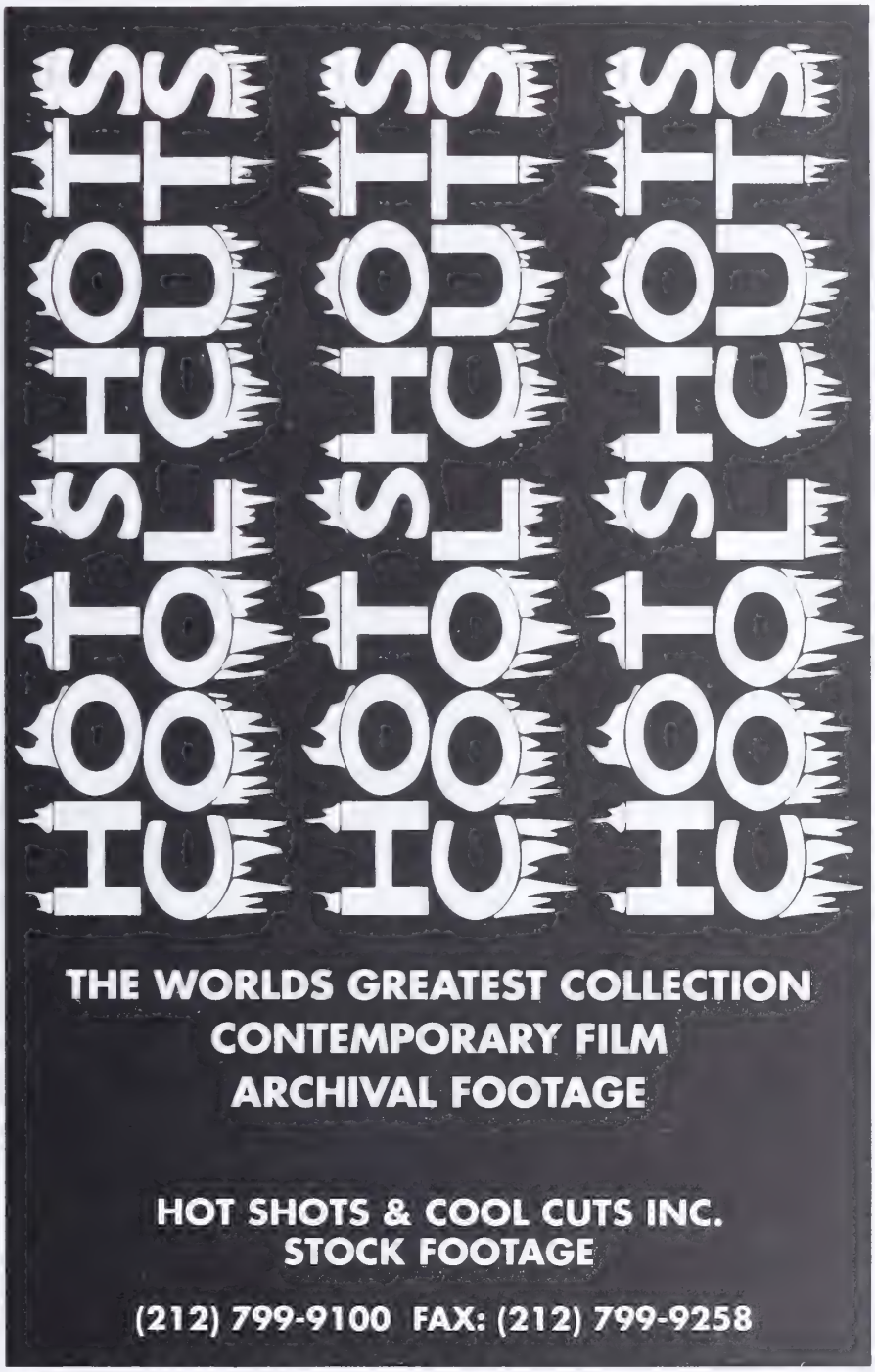
HOWARD FEINSTEIN

Howard Feinstein is a freelance film journalist living in New York.

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SLICING UP THE RIGHTS PIE

TV Licensing Deals for Documentaries

ROBERT L. SEIGEL

The recent controversial decision by the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) to link production funding with home video and other North American audiovisual rights has forced film- and videomakers to seek alternative outlets. Ancillary markets are particularly vital to documentaries, which are rarely exhibited theatrically.

Increasingly, independent producers are becoming interested in selling to basic cable television (e.g., the Learning Channel, Discovery, Arts & Entertainment, Turner Broadcasting Systems) and to pay or premium cable channels (e.g., Home Box Office). These outlets may coproduce or cofinance independent productions, or simply acquire the rights to air them.



Dear America: Letters Home From Vietnam **premiered on HBO with a "holdback" provision and had its theatrical release later.**

Courtesy HBO

Regardless of whether a project is a coproduction or an acquisition, producers must be prepared to negotiate the media rights they are licensing. This article reviews the points to negotiate and issues to address when selling nonfiction productions to television.

License terms

Most basic and pay cable channels request exclusive broadcast rights for the term of the license. "Broadcast rights" include commercial, basic, and pay television, so, theoretically, a pay cable service like HBO could sub-license a program to another cable service, such as A&E. Occasionally a licensee will want exclusive broadcast rights for only a portion of the license term (e.g., for six months after the initial broadcast). In general, producers should try to retain the rights to home video (domestic and foreign), foreign television, plus theatrical and nontheatrical (foreign and domestic) exhibition. They should attempt to do so even if a television service has helped finance the project.

The license term for a documentary on television is usually one to five years, with an average of two to three years. The term generally starts from the first airdate. However, a producer may negotiate a license that starts earlier, beginning on the execution of the agreement or on the delivery of all the materials required. But most producers prefer using the initial airdate, since this allows them more time to negotiate a theatrical "window" period prior to broadcast.

When negotiating the license term, a producer should consider not just the number of years but also the number of "runs" or releases. For PBS, the minimum rights package licensed for almost all programming is four runs over a three-year term. However, each run may last as long as seven consecutive days. During that week, a program may be aired an unlimited number of times. This can dilute the project's value to other media, such as home video.

Cable services may also state the need for multiple runs—often a higher number than for public television—since a cable channel's audience can be even more fragmented than public TV's and it requires numerous cablecasts to develop a cumulative audience.

Another point to consider is whether to grant an exclusive television license for the United States or for all of North America. Producers should first try to determine the potential of television sales (and home video) in Canada and Mexico. Public television and often cable may seek exclusivity in the U.S. and border protection for public TV stations or cable services on the Canadian and Mexican borders. When this occurs, a producer can generally negotiate a "day and date" release



Conversely, *Brother's Keeper* was first released theatrically, during an established "window" period, before appearing on *American Playhouse*.

Photo: Derek Berg, courtesy filmmakers

with Canadian and/or Mexican television buyers, so that the premiere broadcasts occur on the same date. Unless a channel or service can demonstrate a compelling reason, producers should attempt to retain not only the Canadian and Mexican television and home video rights, but also all foreign rights.

Home video

With PBS, the Learning Channel, A&E, and others marketing their programs on home video, the issue of home video rights must be addressed. These television services want to reap the benefits of ancillary markets for programs they finance or air—a move reminiscent of how the commercial networks, major film and television studios, and large production companies operate.

The first point to be determined is who has the home video rights. Normally the producers reserve those rights, so that they can license them to buyers. However, PBS has implemented a policy (effective July 1992) that permits it to reserve the right to condition production funding on the availability of such North American audiovisual rights as home video [see "Risky Business: PBS Links Production Funds to Video Rights," December 1992]. Although PBS will not automatically obtain such ancillary rights, producers should address this issue as soon as possible during preliminary negotiations with PBS.

Whether the buyer is PBS or cable, producers need to decide if that television outlet has the appropriate experience and resources to market and distribute their home videos to the public. This is especially important for grassroots-oriented or other specialized programming, for which smaller distributors may have greater expertise in reaching specific niche audiences.

If the producer wants to include home video rights in the licensing, the first issue to settle is whether the producer will share any home video revenues with the media outlet (generally on a 50/50 basis), or whether the rights will be purchased for a flat fee. These home video rights may be exclusive for a territory (e.g., U.S. or North American) or worldwide, if a television service provided most or all of the funding. Although rare, the possibility of an advance against the producer's share of home video proceeds is another point that can be discussed.

However, such ancillary rights as home video are not automatically acquired by a television outlet, even when the outlet has coproduced or cofinanced a project. For an upcoming documentary on Harley Davidson, for example, coproduced by TBS, the American Motorcycle Association, and Cabin Fever Productions, Cabin Fever retains the home video rights and TBS has the U.S. television rights.

Licensing fees

Licensing fees for documentaries can vary significantly, depending on such factors as the quality of the production, the length of the licensing term, the popularity and desirability of the project's topic, and the relative bargaining positions of the television service and the producer. Richard Lorber, president of the sales company Fox/Lorber, says that additional factors to bear in mind are audience numbers and time slot. A program scheduled during primetime, for instance, may generate a greater license fee than one scheduled during the day.

Although most license fees are flat fees (especially for cable), television buyers may pay a producer on a per-minute rate. PBS' national series *P.O.V.*, for instance, has a base rate of $375/minute for four runs in three years beginning with the initial broadcast date for exclusive TV rights. A local series like WNET's *Independent Focus* has a base rate of $55/minute.

Often producers are compelled to negotiate licensing agreements during the postproduction phase of a project. An important issue is who will do the postproduction work. (This is a separate issue from who has final cut.) Public television

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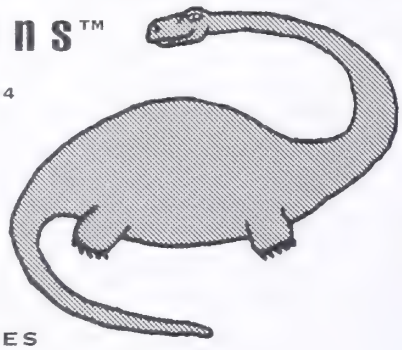
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often permits the film- or videomaker to do his or her own postproduction work, while such outlets as basic cable may want to do their own—especially for the purposes of editing for commercials and scheduling length, and occasionally for controversial content (which is why most TV services will grant the film- or videomaker a good deal of creative latitude but reserve the right to final cut).

A television service may try to reduce the cost of the licensing fee by the cost of postproduction, especially if such expenses are high. The producer should attempt to separate postproduction costs from the license fee whenever possible. Furthermore, whether a project can be aired "as is" or if money must be spent for "re-versioning" (e.g., adding a new voiceover or graphics, especially if the project is aired overseas) can affect a project's license fee. Finally, a producer should request that any editing changes (even for length and commercials) be submitted for prior approval or, at the very least, for the producer's review.

Theatrical windows

Even though theatrical distribution of documentaries is becoming increasingly rare, producers may want to establish "window" periods before a project can be aired on television. A "window" is a release period of time, generally before the license term begins, during which the project can be shown in a particular medium, like pay cable or theatrical, before its exhibition in other media. Such periods may be relatively short if a project is especially newsworthy (such as the fall of the Berlin Wall or the bombing of the World Trade Center) or as long as two years, as was the case with Joe Berlinger and Bruce Sinofsky's *Brothers Keeper*, a documentary that was funded in part by *American Playhouse* and is currently playing in theaters throughout the U.S.

On the other hand, pay or premium cable services like HBO or Showtime may require a "holdback" provision, which guarantees that a

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project will premiere on the channel prior to any non-television or theatrical release. Premium cable services argue that their subscribers pay for original programming in addition to recent theatrical film releases. Two such cases that successfully made the transition to theaters after their television cablecast are *Heart of Darkness: A Filmmaker's Apocalypse*, George Hickenlooper and Fax Behr's documentary on the filming of *Apocalypse Now*, and Bill Couturie's *Dear America: Letters Home from Vietnam*. They were aired first on Showtime and HBO respectively prior to theatrical releases by Triton and the now-defunct Corsair Pictures.

Again, when negotiating either a "window" or a "holdback" provision, the producer must determine the conditions of the license term: i.e., whether the term begins on a fixed date (e.g., the signing of the licensing agreement or an arbitrary but mutually acceptable date) or when a project is initially aired. Most television services will opt for the latter.

Releases

Prior to airing a project, a media outlet will insist that the producer secure all the necessary rights, especially for preexisting music, archival footage, and literary materials. They generally require the producer to provide written documentation that such rights have been secured. In addition, producers should obtain releases from the individuals appearing in the film or video, and for prominently featured locations. Although some producers obtain releases on film or tape when interviewing people, as does Michael Moore in *Roger & Me*, it is preferable to have releases in writing to reduce the possibility of any miscommunication.

Most television channels and services require that a producer obtain Errors & Omissions (E&O) insurance. This covers the cost of potential lawsuits—i.e., the defense and settlement or judgment against a producer for claims concerning copyright and trademark infringement, the invasion of privacy, defamation, and other illegalities. E&O insurance is paid by the producer and sold through licensed insurance brokers in the entertainment field.

With public television and cable channels seeking to reap the monetary benefit of ancillary markets, the livelihood of independent documentarians may seem imperiled. However, according to some, such as Fox/Lorber's Richard Lorber, this situation can be favorable to film/videomakers as the new media technologies and their revenue streams come into play. In any case, it's essential that producers understand that they need to muster as much flexibility and creativity in negotiating deals as they do in producing films and videos.

Robert L. Seigel is a NYC entertainment attorney and a principal in Cinema Film Consulting.



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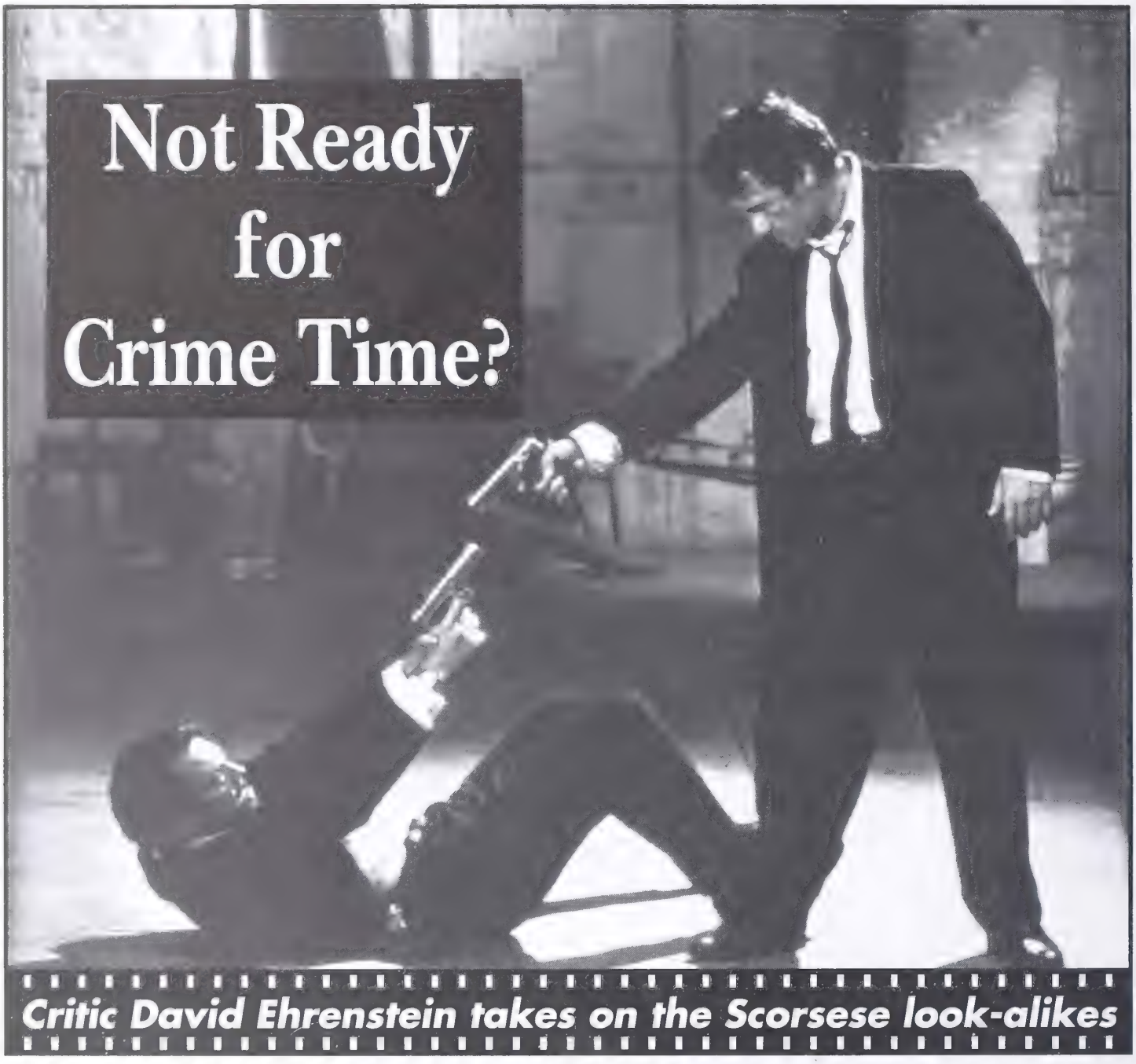
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Not Ready for Crime Time?

Critic David Ehrenstein takes on the Scorsese look-alikes

DAVID EHRENSTEIN

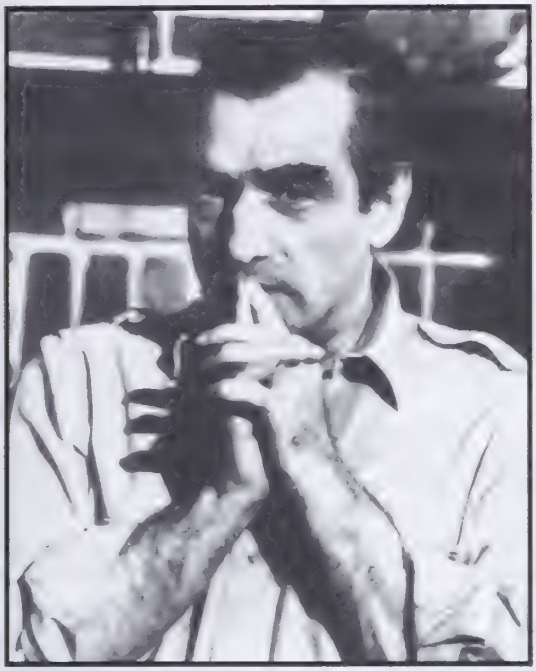
1992 HAS COME TO BE REGARDED AS SOMETHING OF A WATERSHED YEAR for independent film—at least as far as the media is concerned. From the cynical scribes of the trade press to television thumbmeisters Siskel and Ebert to the ever-smiling newsreaders of *Entertainment Tonight*, there's been non-stop chatter about the critical and commercial triumphs of *Howard's End*, *The Crying Game*, and *The Player*. The consensus is that while the studio-produced "mainstream" seems unable to offer anything outside of mindless, pre-digested fodder, canny independents are bracing to take the entire moviemaking game away from Hollywood.

As usual with mass media oversimplifications, there's a grain of truth involved. Hollywood has boxed itself into a megabucks-or-bust corner, and several independent films that a few years ago would have had a hard time attracting viewers outside of the art houses are now gaining wider audience favor. Still, the status quo of production and distribution methods isn't about to alter anytime soon. The major companies have a lock on prime distribution and exhibition patterns. More important, print and advertising costs have continued to soar, seriously taxing the finances of even the most successful independent releasing companies.

Yet even if bottom line questions are put to one side, 1992's independent "boom" is more apparent than real. The makers of the much-discussed "big three"— James Ivory, Neil Jordan, and Robert Altman—aren't spanking-new talents, but well-established directors who have all, at one time or another, worked with the studios. There are any number of directors on the independent scene who might be cited as "promising talents." Whether their "promise" will be fulfilled, however, is another matter. For while Hollywood may be deserving of every brickbat that's recently been tossed its way in response to its marked lack of imagination, much of the independent scene suffers from thinking that is just as formulaic. The difference is the

An atmosphere of masculine violence pervades Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*, with Steve Buscemi and Harvey Keitel (right).

Courtesy Miramax





The way Scorsese (above) played with the conventions of the B-movie crime thriller in *Taxi Driver* (right), *Mean Streets*, and later work is fundamentally different from the approach of today's younger directors.

Photo (above): Phil Caruso, courtesy Amblin Entertainment, right courtesy Columbia Pictures

kind of formula involved and the sub-genre it has created: the violent "art" film exemplified by *Reservoir Dogs*, *Laws of Gravity*, and *Bad Lieutenant*.

In a way this trio of critically-praised crime melodramas characterizes the state of independent film in 1992 far more than *Howard's End*, *The Crying Game*, and *The Player*. The former three are all outfitted/with minimal plots centered on white heterosexual male violence. All of them are highlighted by deliberately showy, long-take sequences designed to call attention to the skills of their respective directors: Quentin Tarantino, Nick Gomez, and Abel Ferrara. And all of them pay equally showy homage to Martin Scorsese.

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OBJECTIVELY SPEAKING, MARTIN SCORSESE SHOULDN'T BE A NEGATIVE influence on any filmmaker. The contemporary American cinema's most respected director, Scorsese began his career in the late 1960s, making his first feature *Who's That Knocking at My Door* (1965-69) under conditions of extreme financial and technical hardship. More important, he refused to listen to the "wisdom" of industry sages who told him that the moviegoing public had no interest in the lives of Italian Americans. It might be that Scorsese set about devoting his entire career to proving those detractors wrong.

After serving a commercial apprenticeship of sorts, directing *Boxcar Bertha* (1972) for Z-movie maestro Roger Corman, Scorsese broke through on his own with *Mean Streets* (1973), *Alice Doesn't Live Here Anymore* (1974) and *Taxi Driver* (1975). Even though they were released by major studios (Warner Bros. and Columbia), all three films were produced with the same independent spirit that informed his first feature—sharp characterization, avoidance of narrative cliche, and deeply expressive utilization of editing and camera movement. Over the years, Scorsese has in one way or another kept faith with that same filmmaking style, putting his concerns as an artist before those of Hollywood commerce to create works that have challenged audiences on the most profound emotional and intellectual levels. Unlike his like-minded predecessors Orson Welles, John Cassavetes, and Robert Altman, Scorsese has somehow managed to do this while continuing to function within an increasingly pressured and competitive industry.

But it's not Scorsese's integrity that appears to be the real attraction for Tarantino, Gomez, and Ferrara. Rather, their films are fixated on Scorsese's *aura* instead—the atmosphere of masculine violence that far too many otherwise thoughtful critics seem to suggest (Pauline Kael, Vincent Canby, and J. Hoberman among them) is at the heart of all that Martin Scorsese has to offer.

On a simple level this is reflected in the casting of Harvey Keitel (a key Scorsese actor) in pivotal roles in *Reservoir Dogs* and *Bad Lieutenant*. Even



Actor Harvey Keitel, affiliated with Scorsese since the 1968 film *Who's That Knocking at My Door?*, is prominently featured in both Abel Ferrara's *Bad Lieutenant* and Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*, prompting critics to cite Scorsese's influence when writing about the new crime dramas.

Courtesy Aries Films

more obviously there's the way in which the scenario of *Laws of Gravity* blatantly apes the central character conflict of *Mean Streets*. The destructive friendship scenario that brought Scorsese's Charlie and Johnny Boy to such vivid life in *Mean Streets* is, for all intents and purposes, xeroxed by Gomez and unceremoniously plopped right into the center of *Laws of Gravity* intact—right down to the climactic act of violence that brings the film to a close. But beyond such unabashed lifts, the "Scorsese-ness" of all these films comes through most strongly in the manner in which they play with the conventions of the B-movie crime thriller.

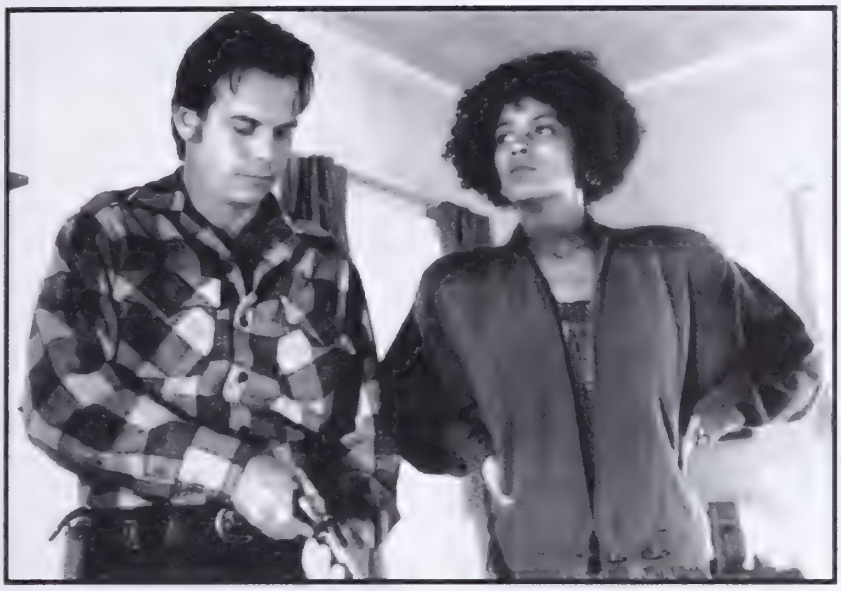
You could write a master's thesis on the multifarious references to genre flicks famous and obscure that flow through the superstructure of *Mean Streets*, *Taxi Driver*, *The King of Comedy*, and *GoodFellas*. But with the exception of the last-mentioned work, none of these Scorsese films can by any stretch of the imagination be cited as examples of the crime genre per se. Even *GoodFellas*, with its Elia Kazan-like naturalism and Jean-Pierre Melville-inspired eye for detail, can't truly be regarded as a simple action thriller. It has far too much on its mind—politics, capitalism, friendship, morality, sex, drugs, and rock and roll. *Reservoir Dogs*, *Laws of Gravity*, and *Bad Lieutenant*, on the other hand, suggest what Scorsese might have been like had his passion for B movies remained at a superficial level—one content to recapitulate surface effects without recourse to character, narrative, or social comment.

Reservoir Dogs recounts the bloody aftermath of a crime caper gone wrong. While the premise recalls Kubrick's *The Killing*, the interactions of Tarantino's figures (they're far too sketchily drawn to be called characters) suggest select moments of *GoodFellas* extended to feature length. In this study of mobster life, Scorsese shows how violence is connected directly to the anti-social impulses most people feel without ever acting upon them. The results of these impulses are then thrown back in the viewer's face via the pathological extreme to which the film's characters take them. We may find the hair-trigger temper of Joe Pesci's Tommy amusing at first, but when Scorsese shows us how little the character truly cares for human life, the laughter sticks in our throats.

In *Reservoir Dogs* impulsive violence is on screen for its own sake. Anything that gets a rise out of a spectator is seen as worth the film's time, regardless of its relevance. Likewise Tarantino brandishes Howard Stern-style "daring" in the viewer's face through dialog obsessively peppered with racist and misogynist asides. The "joke" we are clearly meant to appreciate is that no women or African Americans ever appear on screen. If they had, the film might have been about something other than its smug, preening infatuation with its assumption of its own hipness.

Laws of Gravity is a good deal less giddy than *Reservoir Dogs*, but in the final analysis just as dramatically unsatisfying. A study of petty criminals on the lowest rung of the anti-social ladder, it suggests at first that it's out to explore its characters along neo-realist lines. Gomez's use of hand-held camera is plainly designed to give the film a documentary air. But rather than draw us closer, the film's visual style keeps everything at a distance. Shoving a lens in an actor's face can't in and of itself tell us anything about the character the performer is playing. Likewise hurtling the camera from one side of room to another, as Gomez does frequently—clearly intended to invoke the sense of dramatic place Scorsese created in *Taxi Driver* and *Mean Streets*—only serves to underscore the fact that his reach exceeds his grasp. But just as with Tarantino, Gomez's effort is proffered as applause-worthy for its own sake. Similarly his inability to fully explore his character's lives squares with his desire to create a cooly empathy-free *mise-en-scene*.

Bad Lieutenant is a somewhat more substantial moviegoing experience than *Reservoir Dogs* and *Laws of Gravity*, partly because Abel Ferrara has more of a filmmaking track record than Tarantino and Gomez, but also because he appears to be struggling to create some degree of empathetic involvement. A study of a corrupt, drug-addicted policeman, *Bad Lieutenant* plainly owes as much to Bresson's *Pickpocket* as it does to *Taxi Driver* or *Raging Bull*. But few viewers are likely to think of anything other than



Violence, rather than sex, is now the coin of much independent film. Recent examples include (clockwise from bottom left) *Guncrazy*, by Tamra Davis; *One False Move*, by Carl Franklin; *Menace II Society*, by Allan and Albert Hughes; and even Gregg Araki's *The Living End*.

Courtesy Film Forum, I.R.S. Releasing, New Line Cinema, and filmmaker

What do you do after you've made your mark with a crime genre film?









Keitel in *Reservoir Dogs*.
Courtesy Miramax

Scorsese's films, as Ferrara has so self-consciously set out to outdo them.

The uncouth brutality of Scorsese's Jake La Motta in *Raging Bull* shocked audiences in 1980, thus in 1992 a "smart" director feels his sole recourse is to do the master one better. The scene in which Keitel's Lieutenant masturbates before a pair of teenage girls he has stopped for a traffic violation is the film's *piece de resistance*. It would seem that Ferrara would be breaking new grounds of graphic grubbiness. But his "daring" is nonetheless discreet. For while Ferrara shows Keitel lewdly groaning, he spares us that most treasured staple of the porn industry—the "come shot."

What theory-minded critics might call the "structuring absence" of this moment is matched in *Reservoir Dogs* in the scene where the camera turns away while one character slices off the ear of another, and in the last scene of *Laws of Gravity* where the death of a major character is deliberately kept off-screen. Still these momentary lapses of expressiveness shouldn't necessarily be interpreted as failures of nerve on the filmmakers' parts—just momentary lapses of expressiveness. For Tarantino and Gomez are both capable of graphic extremity when it comes to violence. As for Ferrara, he may very well have been motivated by the fact that a more explicit shot might have created a sense of genre confusion in the spectator. *Bad Lieutenant* isn't a porn film. But like *Reservoir Dogs* and *Laws of Gravity* its interest in violence is in every way prurient. And it is this fact that also underscores what has become independent production's new bottom line: violence as a sales tool.

"The torch has been passed from sex to violence," claims critic B. Ruby Rich is her essay "Art House Killers," recently published in *Sight and Sound* (December 1992). "Ignore the rhetoric to the contrary: people are getting off. The fix is in, the rush delivered. Otherwise the films wouldn't work the way they do and the hype wouldn't be as hot."

There's no denying Rich's point. With sex a self-sufficient generic industry, violence is now the coin of the independent realm—critically as much as commercially. Review after review of *One False Move* praised Carl Franklin's skill as a director of sharply observed, well-acted thriller material. But as well-made as the film is (and it's in many respects superior to the works cited above), is mere genre professionalism all a director should aspire to? Similarly, while Tom Kalin's *Swoon* and Greg Araki's *The Living End* have much to say about gay American life past and present, it isn't all that unreasonable to wonder if their makers would have had as much success with stories outside of the crime genre.

And what do you do after you've made your mark with a genre film? After making his mark in 1981 with *Ms. 45*, Abel Ferrara's career has shuttled from low-budget programmers (*Fear City*) to more personal genre projects (*China Girl*) to television (*Crime Story*) to directorial gun-for-hire ventures (*Body Snatchers*). While his forthcoming *Snake Eyes*, with Keitel, James Russo, and Madonna, may provide him with a boost, the overall impression of his trajectory is that of a director moving in place. Tamra Davis, who has impressed many with her violent "art" film calling-card, *Guncrazy* (a perfectly respectable variation on *They Drive by Night*, *Thieves Like Us*, and *Badlands*) has followed it with *CB4*, a middle-range mass market comedy about the hip-hop music scene. You can't really call it progress. Simply consider the fact that *Fear of a Black Hat* and *Menace II Society* will shortly join *CB4* as an apparent hip-hop subgenre bursts upon the scene. Good news? Not really. More like *old* news, for these films are as in thrall to macho violence as any of the "art" genre thrillers that preceded them.

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WHEN MARTIN SCORSESE BEGAN HIS CAREER, THE DIRECTOR'S DESIRE was to put on screen Italian American life as he knew it growing up on the streets of New York. Producer after producer told him in no uncertain terms that no one was interested in either Italian Americans or any of the other subjects he felt were worthy of film treatment. Luckily he refused to listen to any of them. There are still filmmakers who refuse to listen—Gus Van Sant (*My Own Private Idaho*), Derek Jarman (*Edward II*, *Wittgenstein*), Leos Carax (*Les Amants du Pont-Neuf*), Werner Schroeter (*Malina*), Sally Potter (*Orlando*) to name a few. None of them traffic in "art" genre violence. Neither do they have anything much in common on other levels. About the only thing that genuinely connects these filmmakers is a passion for making works on their terms regardless of the dictates of fashion or the pressures of the marketplace. None of them was made within reassuring think-alike contours of the genre flick. None of them was made outside of a context of commercial adversity—industry-sharpie after industry-sharpie telling their makers that no one was interested in seeing a film like that. Happily, the directors didn't listen.

Just like Martin Scorsese.

David Ehrenstein is the film critic for The Advocate. *His most recent book,* The Scorsese Picture: The Art and Life of Martin Scorsese, *is published by Birch Lane Press.*

BEARING ALL AT THE BERLINALE

The Berlin International Film Festival

MICHELE SHAPIRO

I was forewarned that attending the Berlin International Film Festival for the first time could resemble diving blindfolded into a cavernous black hole and coming up for air only after the fun had subsided two weeks later. By its very nature, the festival and its accompanying film market overwhelm: during a 12-day period (February 11 to 22 this year) approximately 400 screenings of films and documentaries from European countries, the U.S., the Far East, and Africa (80 percent of which were premieres) took place around the clock at 16 theaters throughout the sprawling city.



Lady Sings the Blues: Ellen Fisher Turk and Andrew Weeks' *Split*, which features the now-deceased drag queen International Chrysis, received accolades but no firm sales commitments in Berlin.

Courtesy filmmaker

The seven-plus hour flight from New York to Berlin provided me with ample time to plot my strategy. Armed with a program for the 43rd Annual Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin and the "Berlin Piece by Piece" guide supplied by American Independents and Features Abroad (AIFA), I attempted to formulate a tentative plan of viewing action. I also set aside a few afternoons and evenings for press conferences (Spike Lee, Danny DeVito, Gregory Peck, and Billy Wilder would all be there in the flesh answering questions), panel discussions, receptions, and the parties I'd heard so much about. ("Don't waste time going to screenings," one Berlin pro told me ahead of time. "Just be sure to hit the parties. You'll be amazed at the connections you can make.")

After a few jet-lagged days of vanning it back and forth from the Press Center on the outskirts of town to the European Film Market, located directly across from a bombed-out church in the center of former West Berlin, I stopped wishing that I could clone myself and concluded that one can see only so much at a festival of such epic proportions. Thereafter, I slowed my pace and learned that the real fun comes from chance meetings with filmmakers passionately promoting their projects and buyers speaking favorably of a screening they had just attended. Perhaps the greatest surprise for me was that, despite its carnivalesque character, the festival managed to create an atmosphere that was at the same time relaxed and invigorating.

One of three major international festivals, Berlin, with an annual budget of $5.62-million, intentionally lacks the glitziness of Cannes and the discreet artsiness of Venice. Started by the German government shortly after World War II, the festival's longtime role was as a bridge between Eastern and Western Europe. In the 1970s, the creation of the Forum section, a haven for Third-World political and artistic films, and the predominantly gay Panorama section, helped solidify the festival's image as groundbreaking. But now that its political mission has been undercut by the fall of the Iron Curtain and the competition for innovative premieres has increased among European festivals, the Berlinale is scrambling to redefine its identity. For starters, the focus of the prestigious Competition section has shifted.

Russian entries, once a section staple, were absent this year from the 25 films vying for the festival's top honor, the Golden Bear. For the first time, however, African and East Asian films went head-to-head with the traditional European and Hollywood fare. In addition, two low-budget independent films from the States—Ang Lee's *The Wedding Banquet* (a U.S.-Taiwan coproduction) and Haile Gerima's *Sankofa* (a U.S.-African coproduction)—gave other films, including Hollywood heavyweights *Malcolm X* and *Hoffa*, a run for the gold and silver grizzlies.

Both *The Wedding Banquet*, which takes place in New York but features a primarily Taiwanese cast, and Xie Fei's *The Women from the Lake of Scented Souls*, filmed in Mainland China, bagged coveted Golden Bears. "It was definitely the year of the Far East," said Moritz de Hadeln, the festival's director. After the awards ceremony, a festival insider was quoted in *Variety* as saying the reason for the tie was political. "It would be impossible to give the nod to China and not Taiwan," said the source. But de Hadeln cited growing freedom from censorship, decentralized production, and more links between China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan as reasons for the Far East's strong showing.

The U.S.'s presence at this year's festival was also stronger than in years past. Twenty-seven

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independent films were screened as part of the official festival program and an additional 12 were shown exclusively at the market. Of the 11 film- and videomakers whose works appeared in the Forum section and the 14 whose works were presented as part of the Panorama, several were awarded prizes at the festival's conclusion. Nick Gomez's *Laws of Gravity* won the Wolfgang-Staudte Prize for "a film whose dynamic energy best exemplifies the spirit of 'young cinema.'" Barbara Hammer received a Polar Bear for her significant contribution to gay and lesbian culture, and the Teddy Bear for Best Documentary went to Tom Joslin and Peter Friedman's *Silverlake Life: A View from Here*. Ellen Fisher Turk and Andrew Weeks' *Split: From William to Chrysis, Portrait of a Drag Queen* also won a special jury prize from Panorama, and Marc Huestis' documentary *Sex Is...* won the audience prize for best gay film. There was no honor for Best Promotion, but were there one, Huestis, who came to the festival bearing two styles of *Sex Is...* t-shirts, buttons, flyers, and promotional watches, would have won hands down.

Not a bad showing for U.S. independents, considering the fact that Ulrich Gregor, director of the Forum section who has been with the festival for 25 years, said he was unimpressed with the offerings at last year's American Film Market. "There were no runaway films," he told *The Independent*. "Fortunately, many more completed tapes were sent in to me after the AFM." Among the U.S. independent works screened as part of the Forum this year were Mark Rappaport's *Rock Hudson's Home Movies*, which the filmmaker describes as "a film about repression and gender coding," Barbara Hammer's *Nitrate Kisses*, and Michal Aviad's *The Women Next Door*, a documentary about women in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Victor Ginsburg, a U.S. filmmaker whose documentary *The Restless Garden*, an exploration of the sexual revolution in Russia, was shown at the market after being rejected by the Forum, had harsh words to say about Gregor and his section. "The guy's been at his job too long," he said from the AIFA booth, which was given a facelift this year thanks to funds from Eastman Kodak. "Just look at the films he's showing. The section's supposed to represent new cinema, but all the groundbreaking stuff is in Panorama."

Sour grapes, perhaps, but the Panorama section *was* hopping this year—the first since Wieland Speck replaced Manfred Salzberger, the section's founder, as its director. The Panorama's diverse array of product ranged from Paris Poitier's *Last Call at Maude's*, which tracks the closing of San Francisco's oldest lesbian bar, to John Sayles' *Passion Fish*.

In its role as promoter of U.S. independents, AIFA, a joint project of the New York Foundation for the Arts and the Independent Feature Project, attempted to structure numerous events around the visiting North Americans. New York City film commissioner Richard Brick moderated a panel on "Shooting in New York," which featured Nick Gomez, Spike Lee, and Peter Miller, producer of the documentary *Passin' It On*, among others. Although the first discussion was poorly attended due to a lack of advance publicity, a second, "The Growth of American Indies: At Home on Foreign Soil," drew a relatively large crowd of both European and American filmmakers. Topics discussed at the panel—which featured David Linde, senior vice president of sales and acquisitions for Miramax International, Sandra Schulberg, managing director of American Playhouse Abroad, and Ted Hope, founder of New York-based Good Machine Productions, among others—included what makes a U.S. project appealing to European coproducers and whether there is room for more than one coproduction



Eighteen U.S. independents, including (l. to r.) Barbara Hammer, Stephen Tolkin, and Haile Gerima, with moderator Geoffrey Gilmore, discussed their works at the American Independents and Features Abroad (AIFA) press conference in Berlin.

Photo: Hélène Caux

AIFA's booth at the European Film Market, which was upgraded this year thanks to funds from Eastman Kodak, provided a comfortable space for filmmakers to meet, gather information, and talk up their current projects.

Photo: Hélène Caux

market in Europe.

The second discussion occurred after Ulrike Hamacher announced the creation of Income, a new coproduction market that will take place in Cologne, Germany from June 13-16. Hamacher was asked why Income did not cooperate with Euro Aim, the promotion arm of the European Community's Media Programme, rather than initiate a new market. Ted Hope responded that, while the main interest of buyers in Berlin is purchasing completed films, coproduction markets, including the Rotterdam Cinemart and ECCO (European Coproduction Market), are most useful for producers seeking additional funding for works-in-progress. (Those interested in obtaining more information on Income can call Hamacher in Düsseldorf at 49-021-193-0500.)

AIFA's press conference for U.S. independents, while poorly attended by journalists, was brimming with so many participants that the filmmakers had to answer questions in two shifts. With Geoffrey Gilmore, director of the Sundance Film Festival, moderating, 18 filmmakers, including festival first-timer John Sayles, discussed their current and future projects, their anticipated audiences, and the problems they faced selling their work in the U.S. and overseas. Bill Miles and Nina Rosenblum, whose Academy Award-nominated documentary *The Liberators: Fighting on Two Fronts in World War II* was screened in Berlin, were conspicuously absent from the conference. The pair had received a barage of negative publicity back in the States after questions arose about the film's accuracy.

Deborah Magosci, whose first film *New! Improved! Real-Life American Fairy Tale* received positive word of mouth at the festival, said she never even thought about having to sell her work when she was making it. "I wanted to make a film about where I see myself in my culture. But the film makes people uncomfortable, and I realize now it might not be saleable."

When asked how it felt to have *The Wedding Banquet* screened in Competition, coproducer James Schamus said it was a mixed blessing. "We have spent almost as much money coming to Berlin as we spent to make the picture," Schamus half-joked. Undoubtedly, he and partner Ted Hope will make it back soon. Since the film's triumphant premiere in Berlin, Samuel Goldwyn has paid a reported $750,000 for distribution rights in the U.S. and several European distribution deals are also in place. In addition, the film grossed $2 million during its first four days in Taiwan following the festival.

The AIFA conference may have been poorly attended by the press, but "it provided a great opportunity for filmmakers to meet and discuss their work," said Kathe Sandler, who completed her eight-year project, the documentary *A Question of Color*, just weeks before the festival. She almost didn't make it to Berlin, but Sandler, who got three offers from international sales agents as a result of her film's screenings in the Panorama section, is glad she did.

Split's codirector Ellen Fisher Turk was less pleased with her accomplishments in Berlin. Although a number of foreign buyers requested copies of the film, "I wanted to walk away with good solid sales and didn't," she said. Still, the film has been accepted by numerous festivals, including Australia, Vancouver, and Rivertown, and will be screened at the Museum of Modern Art in New York on May 20. Turk added that she would have liked more help from AIFA in meeting buyers and in arranging interviews with the American press.

Lynda Hansen, AIFA's director, said she was disappointed that so many U.S. independent films were screened late in the festival, when buyers had already left Berlin. "Maybe it's just a coincidence," she said, "or maybe the festival heads are

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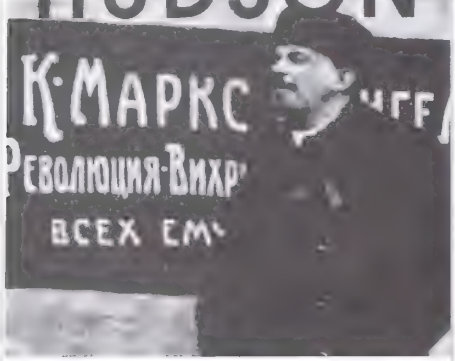
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trying to get buyers to stay in town longer, but it's never happened before."

The European Film Market, where more than 300 companies touted their product to approximately 500 buyers, was the true heart of the festival. Yet despite the socializing that took place at the Cine Center's smoke-filled cafe and the non-stop show of product in the market's 12 screening rooms, many doubt that a record number of deals were struck this year. "We do not claim to compete with MIFED, Cannes, and the American Film Market," said Beki Probst, the market's director.

Instead, many buyers, including David Thomas, vice president of marketing for the New Cultural Network, used the opportunity to scope out product. "Our purpose in going to Berlin was to establish contacts with international filmmakers," said Thomas. His Baltimore-based cable channel, run by U.S. independent filmmakers, anticipates a fall 1994 launch in the U.S., and he was shopping for short films, features, and documentaries. Despite what many considered a lackluster year in terms of its offerings, Thomas said he saw many films he was interested in acquiring.

Neither the lack of actual sales inside nor the

A Berlin Studio with Money and Talent to Spare

A visit to the Babelsberg Studio outside of Berlin is a trip back in time to the glorious past—and forward to an uncertain future. Founded in 1912, home of the first films of Garbo and Dietrich, Babelsberg is becoming a Media City in Central Europe.

Located in picturesque Potsdam, the 81-year-old studio is Europe's oldest and largest film and television complex. It is being newly refurbished and is ready for action. Many films are utilizing the studio, as Babelsberg offers all services and facilities, from screenplay development to the final print. Aside from renting stages and cutting rooms, Babelsberg itself will produce and coproduce films. In addition, producers, including Americans, are invited to discuss film productions and collaborations.

The studio's history could itself serve as fodder for many a film script. In 1929, Europe's first talkies were made at Babelsberg's soundstages. The 12 years of the Third Reich saw the production of 1,100 Nazi feature films, and after the Third Reich's collapse in 1945, Babelsberg, which fell within the Soviet zone of occupied Berlin, began making Communist films and continued to do so until 1990.

Since the Berlin Wall tumbled, the reunified German government has created a new agency, the "Treuhand," to sell off to private companies the state-owned properties of the former German Democratic Republic. Accordingly, Babelsberg has now passed into the hands of a newly created entity, combining French, German, and British financial groups.

Babelsberg's production chief for the last six months is German-born Volker Schlondorff, director of the Oscar-winning *The Tin Drum*. Schlondorff, who also directed Dustin Hoffman in Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*, has signed a five-year contract with the studio. Eight years a student in Paris and assistant to Louis Malle and Alain Resnais, seven years a U.S. resident, Schlondorff speaks perfect French and English and brings to Babelsberg a sophistication and international outlook that matches the studio's main purpose: to create a European film metropolis. Germany's subsidy program for filmmakers, in place for 25 years, is an added inducement for producers to work at Babelsberg. Studios in Prague and Budapest have lower rates, Schlondorff concedes, "but we can help foreign productions cash in on the German subsidy program." Prior to the fall of the wall, filmmakers who shot in Berlin received a subsidy of up to 50 percent of production costs. Although not as high any longer, subsidies offered by Berlin's federal government and its senate are still generous.

Schlondorff, who has set aside a fund of $42 million which he hopes to administer like the Sundance Film Institute to cultivate emerging writers and directors, complains that he recently waded through 200 screenplays and found only three of merit. "Why do I receive all these low-budget screenplays? If anyone comes up with a project that needs a lot of money, one that is valid, we're ready to go. But we don't want to make merely imitation American movies."

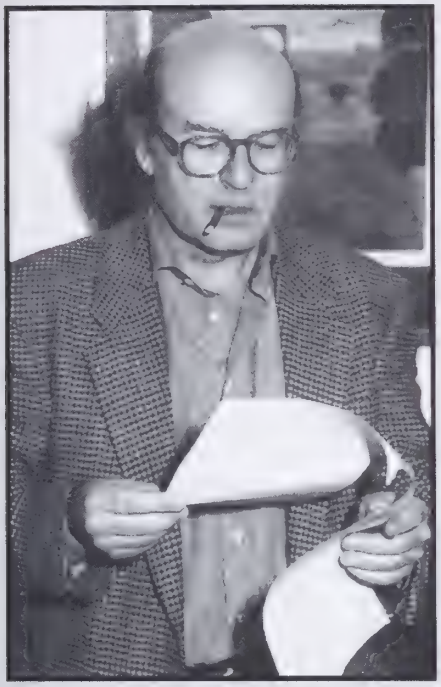
Currently, Babelsberg has a staff of 630, down from 2,300 prior to 1989. All facilities are being modernized with state of the art equipment. The renovations will take several years. The studio now has 127 buildings on 114 acres, with 24 acres of backlot sets, including a Medieval village. An additional 40 buildings are outside the main complex. There are 11 soundstages, including the behemoth Metropolis of 57,000 sq. feet, built in 1926 for Fritz Lang's film of that name. There are 31 editing rooms, four dubbing theaters, rooms housing lights; sound recording; music; mix; dub; cameras; set design and construction. The prop department alone has one million items. There are 150,000 costumes and uniforms of all nationalities and periods, plus 2,000 wigs and 1,200 beards and moustaches.

Babelsberg literature lists prices: during the summer, a director of photography costs $1,260 for a week of 10-hour days; technicians are $32 per day. The largest of the soundstages is $2,000

blustery weather outside could dampen the spirit of this year's festival. Nancy Walzog, vice president of Tapestry International, said the laid back atmosphere is hard to beat. "It's so different than MIP-TV and MIFED where people all wear suits and sit in screening booths all day."

Okay. So I missed a few good screenings, a few good parties, a few good stories. But like good caviar, the Berlin International Film Festival takes a few swallows to really appreciate. I'm ready for next year.

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of The Independent.



Volker Schlondorff, managing director of Studio Babelsberg in Berlin, hopes to turn the historic space into a Media City.

Courtesy Studio Babelsberg

per day. Rates in winter are somewhat higher.

For more information, contact Volker Schlondorff, managing director, Babelsberg Studio, August-Babel-Strasse 26-53, Potsdam 0-1591, Germany; tel: 0-3733-720, fax: 0-3733-77513.

GORDON HITCHENS

Gordon Hitchens visited Babelsberg during this year's Berlin International Festival. For 15 years, he has been the U.S. assistant for the festival's International Forum of Young Cinema. He is also assistant to the Nippon Audio Visual Library in Tokyo.

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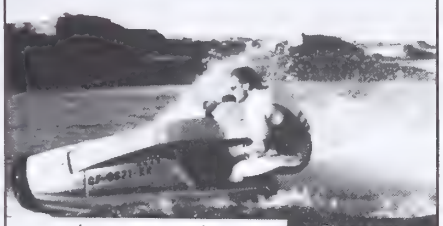
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Z-PLACE TO BE

The Sundance Film Festival

PATRICIA THOMSON

A week before the Sundance Film Festival kicked off, the National Guard was called into the Park City area. Utah's 10-year drought had ended with a record six feet of snow that was crushing rooftops and tumbling off A-frame condos onto the heads of unsuspecting tenants. By Sundance's opening on January 21, the emergency had passed, leaving only deep snowdrifts and a giddy euphoria among ski buffs and local merchants over the fresh powder that transformed the pine and aspen-covered mountains into an exhilarating winter wonderland.



***Ruby in Paradise*, Victor Nunez's first film in seven years (with Allison Dean and Ashley Judd, right), was one of the high points at Sundance.**

Courtesy filmmaker

Business was brisk at the ski resorts, and equally so at the festival. Advance ticket sales were up 30 percent from 1992, according to Gary Beer, executive vice president of the Sundance Institute. At the festival's start, Beer reported a record 6,000 attendees, plus 300 press. To accommodate the growing numbers, the 10-day festival added a much-needed 500-seat screening facility in a renovated high school-turned-cultural center.

While attendance figures have soared every year, the number of films is kept at a relatively manageable level: 15 in the documentary competition, 16 in the dramatic, about 50 in various sidebars, plus dozens of shorts. The general consensus this year was that they were an uneven batch containing no potential break-out hit like *sex, lies, and videotape*, which launched its precipitous climb at Sundance in 1989. Last year's festival is a better parallel, when good word-of-mouth was divided between roughly 10 to 15 features. But whatever the line-up at Sundance, one can safely assume that the festival's films will dominate the theatrical releases of independent productions during the rest of the year. Think of 1992: *Fathers and Sons*; *Gas, Food and Lodging*; *In the Soup*; *Johnny Suede*; *Jumpin' at the Boneyard*; *The Living End*; *Swoon*; *Reservoir Dogs*; *The Waterdance*; *Zebrahead*; plus such documentaries as *A Brief History of Time*, and *Brother's Keeper* all appeared in Sundance's competition before their theatrical runs.

The buzz in 1993 was similarly splintered among a dozen or so films. Some of the favorites weren't even in the competition. British director Sally Porter's *Orlando*, based on Virginia Woolf's eponymous book, had many admirers, as did Alfonso Arau's *Like Water for Chocolate*, a wonderful folkloric tale from Mexico that has a kinship with the Latin American literary tradition of magical realism.

Most popular among the dramatic competition were Leslie Harris' *Just Another Girl on the IRT* (Miramax); Rob Weiss' *Amongst Friends* (picked up by Fine Line Features shortly after the festival); Michael Steinberg's debut as a solo director, *Bodies, Rest, and Motion* (Fine Line Features; Steinberg codirected last year's *Waterdance* with Neal Jimenez); Tony Chan's *Combination Platter*, and Keva Rosenfeld's *Twenty Bucks*.

Then there was *El Mariachi*, by Robert Rodriguez. His $7,000 feature won the audience award, but Rodriguez warranted the Mr. Personality prize. With self-deprecating humor, he won over an auditorium of eager young filmmakers by trading his secrets of low-budget filmmaking: write, shoot, and direct the film yourself; use unpaid friends and family as actors; shoot without rehearsing by feeding the actors a line at a time; shoot only one take, etc. Asked how he got certain swooping shots, he genially demonstrated his hand-held, rubber-legged acrobatics. Queried what he'd do differently with a million-dollar budget (as his two-sequel deal with Columbia surely entails), he replied, "Hardly anything. I'd make it for $7,000 and pocket the rest." The audience laughed approvingly. "No, I'd donate it to charity," he amended. (In fact, he's dedicating part of the profits to his younger siblings' education.)

El Mariachi, which playfully borrows tried-and-true conventions of action-adventure films, is a good-humored lark that doesn't pretend to be more than it is. The other dramatic feature that captivated audiences and captured the Grand Jury

prize for best dramatic feature (split with Bryan Singer's *Public Access*) is of a completely different nature: *Ruby in Paradise*, by veteran filmmaker Victor Nunez (*Gal Young Un*, *A Flash of Green*), is a subtle character study with a precise, distilled script that never condescends to its characters or audience. Unlike coming-of-age stories, this focuses on the next stage of life, when a person is living on one's own for the first time. The character Ruby (played with depth and gravity by Ashley Judd) is a young woman who has left her Tennessee home before she's "beaten or pregnant" and lands in Florida's "redneck Riveria" during the off-season. She finds work in a knick-knack beach shop, then loses it when a fling with the boss' son goes sour. Forced to look for ever more marginal jobs in the recession-ravaged South, Ruby winds up at an industrial laundry company. She meets a local man and becomes involved, but at arm's length. He is kind, caring, an environmentalist ("I'm into low-impact living") and supportive of other liberal causes—but ultimately paralyzed by his knowledge and cynicism. *Ruby in Paradise* is full of quiet insights into a young woman's struggle to forge her identity in the face of low-level jobs and boyfriends with conflicting agendas.

Nunez, known as a writer's director, is never formulaic. No doubt this is part of the reason he had so much trouble getting a project greenlighted during the seven years since *A Flash of Green*. "If you want to count all the submissions and proposals," Nunez says, "it's probably the sixth or seventh film that I've tried to get off the ground." He approached Hollywood, *American Playhouse*, and other independent sources, but the projects were turned down for being "too small" or "too far out." Even with *Ruby* he was asked, "Does she have to keep a journal?" "Does it have to end so down?" Nunez finally decided to scale back, dig into his own pockets, and just do it. So with his savings, an inheritance, and a bank loan, he shot *Ruby* for $350,000 ($600,000 with deferrals and lab work). "Our drama, our high adventure here at the festival is finding a distributor," he says. (They succeeded. In early March, October Films picked up all North American rights and will open the film in theaters this fall.)

Seated on the balcony at Z-Place, Sundance's gymnasium-turned-reception area, Nunez surveys the crowd of young directors as they swap business cards and try to spot Hollywood agents and buyers. "You can't go through seven years of being locked out without some bitter recriminations," he admits, reflectively. "I left Los Angeles because I thought, 'This is getting me nowhere.' Still, every force in the country pushes you there. This is Sundance's downside. Every young filmmaker here feels they want to make a picture the studios will buy."

But Nunez, a long-time Florida resident, had a different kind of ambition. "I wanted to be like a Southern writer," he says, characterizing the literary tradition of Flannery O'Connor, John D. MacDonald, and Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings as one in which "character, place, and story are inextricably linked." "This linkage is more evident in Europe, or in fiction, than in U.S. filmmaking," he says, noting dryly that Hollywood would have no trouble setting Alice in Wonderland on Mars. "In order to be universal," he says, "you first have to be specifically where you are."

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Character, place, and story were also inextricably linked in many of the festival's documentaries, which truly shined this year. In fact, they overshadowed the dramatic competition—a rare occurence at this fiction-oriented festival and no doubt a surprise to those hyping the twenty-something set, who were a prominent presence in the festival program.

The festival buzz about the documentaries was immediately echoed in the press. "The real story of Sundance '93 was the renaissance of first-rate documentaries. For riveting drama and meaty subjects they left most of the dramatic films in the dust," wrote David Ansen in *Newsweek* under the headline, "Documentaries Steal the Show." And *New York Times* critic Bernard Weinraub penned, "If there's a consensus this year it's that the movies here, as in Hollywood, are not better than ever. Younger than ever, perhaps, but not better. What has emerged starkly...is that for the first time documentaries are dominating a festival that has been known, since it started in 1981, as a haven for features."

Like *Ruby*, many of the strongest documentaries were by experienced filmmakers. Interestingly, many also had the common denominator of including the filmmakers themselves in the cast of real characters. This forthrightness about the author's hand brazenly defies the conventions of network news documentary, which consider any acknowledgement of subjectivity suspect (and to this day dominate virtually all TV documentary production, except for the ghettoized "point of view" programs).

The documentary Grand Jury prize was split between two works that shared this trait. In *Silverlake Life: The View from Here*, director Peter Friedman narrates how he took over Tom Joslin's video diary when his former teacher and mentor became too ill to finish chronicling his mortal battle with AIDS. The core of the film is the footage of Joslin and his long-time lover going through good times and bad during the last year of Joslin's life—alternately joking, sobbing, and fuming to the camera-cum-diary.

Children of Fate: Life and Death in a Sicilian Family shared the Grand Jury documentary prize, and subsequently won the top prize at the Cinéma du Réel festival and was picked up by First Run Features for theatrical release. This film also makes no pretense about the filmmakers' invisibility. It looks at the life of an impoverished Sicilian woman, Angela, her jobless and abusive husband, and their children. Much of the footage was shot in 1961 by Michael Roemer and Robert Young, who were



Leslie Harris made her directorial debut with *Just Another Girl on the I.R.T.*, which features a smart teen (Ariyan Johnson) with misinformed, gossip-based ideas about birth control.

Courtesy Miramax



Logo from *Saviors of the Forest*'s press kit, which included a "complementary refrigerator magnet" with their cameraman icon.

Courtesy videomakers

documenting the dire social conditions of the slums of Palermo for NBC. (The network ultimately refused to air their film because it was deemed "too powerful," thus precipitating Young's switch to independent filmmaking.) Angela narrates how she was surprised to see Young's son, Andrew, and Andrew's wife, Susan Todd, appear 30 years later to pick up the narrative thread. The filmmakers' presence clearly had an impact on her life and self-image. "Has my life gotten any better in the last 30 years? I ask myself that a lot, now that I'm being filmed again," she muses. Her answer, enacted throughout the film, is tragically ambivalent.

Earth and the American Dream, by Bill Courtier (*Dear America: Letters Home from Vietnam*) was one of two documentaries dealing with environmental destruction. A 35mm production with stunning photography, the film won a five-minute standing ovation. The other eco-documentary, *Saviors of the Forest*, was decidely less slick, having been shot on Hi8 and Beta, but also more provocative. *Saviors* shows videomakers Bill Day and Terry Schwartz heading for Equador in order to "do something" to help save the rainforest. They hunt for heroes and villains, only to find they've stepped through the looking glass, encountering a world where environmentalists are trying to import a portable sawmill while the big lumber company owners are campaigning for reforestation projects.



Aileen Wournos, a prostitute convicted of killing seven johns in Florida, is trapped at the center of a tabloid media circus in Nick Broomfield's documentary *Aileen Wournos: The Selling of a Serial Killer.*

Courtesy In Pictures Ltd.

Deep in the forest, Day and Schwartz expect to see impersonal, easily villified bulldozers toppling trees. Instead they run across a few poor *colonos* with chainsaws trying to eke out a decent living for their families. Back in Los Angeles, Day and Schwartz show their footage to concerned groups, but are stumped when asked, "What can *we* do to help?" They themselves plant a few trees. Dissatisfied, they take their cameras along on a Greenpeace action targetting a timber ship with 24,000 tons of rainforest wood. (They wryly note that the biggest consumer of rainforest plywood in L.A. is the Hollywood studios for set construction. Day later reported that two days after Warner Bros. was shown the film, the studio issued a statement saying they would no longer buy rainforest lumber.) With refreshing humor in an area dominated by bleak doomsday films, *Saviors of the Forest* offers an eye-opening look at the obstacles and paradoxes facing activists at ground zero. It also expresses with much-needed candor why there are no clear-cut remedies to this ecological and economic muddle.

Day, who has written a feature-length screenplay about the Amazon for director Ridley Scott, was attending Sundance for the first time. "It's not at all what I expected," he says genially. Having attended the Independent Feature Film Market (IFFM) last fall (where Sundance's programmers first spotted *Saviors*), Day anticipated more of the same hard-sell atmosphere. At IFFM, he says, "you had to be more aggressive. Otherwise, with 300 films, you could get lost in the maze. Sundance is smaller, and the sell factor is not as important. It's hard to have a real conversation with anyone at the market. Here, I met some filmmakers, like Nick Broomfield. We talked for 45 minutes at the bar. You wouldn't have time to talk at IFFM."

Broomfield later concurred. "Sundance is a good market to sell, to discuss new ideas, and to meet people. It's also important for gauging audience reaction." Asked if he, as a documentary-maker, felt at all like a second-class citizen (not an infrequent complaint among documentarians at Sundance), Broomfield responds, "I wasn't treated any differently last year with *Monster in a Box*. It really depends on the subject matter."



"Sing it again, Billy." Cory McAbee's wild musical animation *Billy McNair* was one of about 40 shorts scheduled both before every feature and in separate programs at Sundance.

Courtesy filmmaker

The subject of *Aileen Wournos* had already attracted considerable attention from the press and Hollywood before Broomfield began shooting his documentary (a UK Channel Four/HBO coproduction). Wournos, a prostitute now on death row in Florida for killing seven johns, was hyped in the tabloids as the first female serial killer. Abused as a child, threatened and tortured as a prostitute, Wournos continued after her arrest to be exploited by those closest to her. Wourno's lesbian lover sold their story to Hollywood agents. Her lawyer and her recent adoptive mother (a Born-Again Christian and horse farmer in need of cash) demand and receive $10,000 from Broomfield on screen before giving him access to Wournos—despite the Son of Sam law, which prohibits such profiteering. The local police were also complicit; Broomfield reveals that officers entered into discussions with Hollywood production companies *before* Wournos' arrest. This clearly gave them a vested interest: Wournos' arrest and conviction would, after all, make a better story. "This is where 'reality shows' have changed reality," Broomfield declares. "The defense brought up these kinds of contacts, but didn't follow up... I hope this film will generate enough publicity to raise these questions."

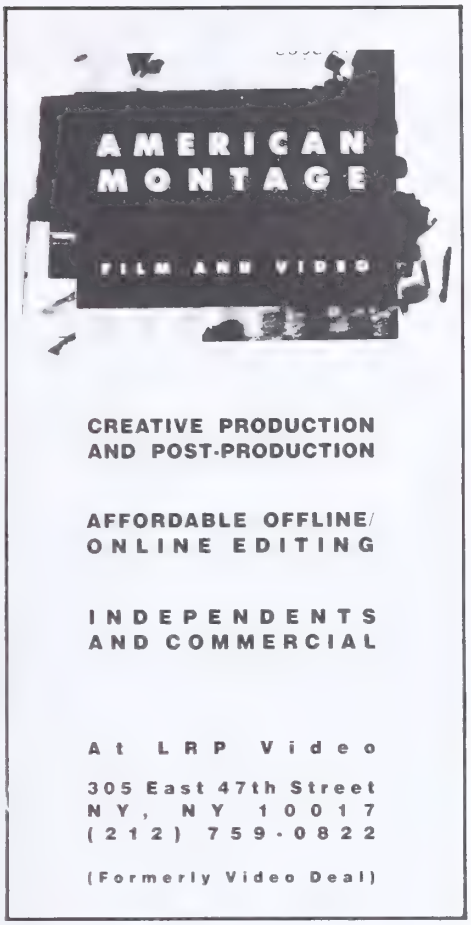
A project like *Aileen Wournos* raises another kind of question: should films that are produced by major television entities like HBO and Channel Four be permitted into the festival, while films by MGM and Disney clearly are not? According to one competition selection advisory board member, it's an issue that came up when considering Barbara Koppel's documentary *Fallen Champ: The Untold Story of Mike Tyson*, which was produced as an NBC Movie-of-the-Week. In *Fallen Champ*'s case, the question became moot; according to Koppel, NBC wanted the February airdate to be its premiere, so Sundance was not an option. But the question remains hanging. It's a difficult one, being tied both to the protean definition of "independent" film and to the harsh reality of funding. Should independent producers be penalized for working with HBO or NBC? Or, do they have an unfair leg up on the festival competition? Are they still "independent" when the television company has final cut or copyright control? What about when the director and TV funder see eye-to-eye? These issues will only get more complicated as independents ride the wave of their success into deals with television programmers and major film production companies.

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At most major festivals, short films find themselves at the bottom of the hierarchy—ignored by press, left out of the prize-winners' circle, and generally forgotten when the ubiquitous question "What have you seen that's good?" comes up. At Sundance, shorts are again on the bottom rung, but this festival offers more hidden benefits than usual.

"I wasn't aware of how significant Sundance was until I got the reaction from the industry," says Lisa Krueger, whose half-hour narrative about a young woman forced to sell her horse, *Best Offer*, was included in one of the five shorts programs. "Management agents called *me* and asked for cassettes, based on this and IFFM." Krueger, previously a script supervisor on such films as *Mystery Train*, *Mr. and Mrs. Bridge*, and *King of New York*, came to Sundance with her sights set on future feature projects. "I'm working on a feature-length screenplay now," she says, "so while I'm here I'd like to make contacts with those people I'll eventually want to approach with it."

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shorts programs are regularly attended by distributors, development personnel, and, increasingly, foreign buyers. Some filmmakers have sold scripts and gotten agents as a result. "Most all of the [feature film] directors here made shorts about five years ago," says Sundance program associate John Cooper, who selects 40 to 50 shorts out of roughly 400 submissions and works seen at IFFM, film schools, and media centers.

Sundance's first program of shorts, presented four years ago, comprised Chanticleer projects—i.e., first-time-director calling card films. Nowadays the filmmakers are a motlier crew, at various points in their careers. This year they included actor Mathew Modine, who lost his luggage en route to Park City but managed to hand-deliver his off-beat and well-received *When I Was a Boy*. There were established animators like Candy Kugel and Vincent Caferelli (*We Love It*), plus musician-animator Cory McAbee, whose wild *Billy Nayer*—drawn with housepaints on over 2,000 sheets of 8x11 paper—featured a truly memorable party animal. After completing festival entry *Fugitive Love*, Tamara Jenkins is now about to direct a $180,000 half-hour program for the *TV Families* anthology series, funded by the Independent Television Service (ITVS). And there were many others, like Jane Weinstock (*The Clean Up*) and Rub Kuhns (*King's Day Out*), who are poised to move on to feature productions.

Part of Sundance's attraction is its personal touch. "Cooper treats short film directors like we're all Martin Scorsese," enthuses Joey Forsyte, producer/DP of the short *Deaf Heaven*. A day after she and director Steve Levitt submitted *Deaf Heaven* for consideration, they got calls from two distributors, at Cooper's recommendation. Cooper confirms his behind-the-scenes assistance. "I also help establish contacts with the Sundance Labs. I have a 'push list' that I pass along to the Screenwriting Workshop," he notes.

This kind of contact between festival programmers and the Sundance Institute workshops is one of the unsung benefits of the festival. Forsyte, who produced Dean Parisot's *Tom Goes to the Bar* in 1985, recalls "After the festival, Dean was brought back for the screenwriting workshop. They believed in him so much. He didn't even have a project then! It was an act of faith." For Forsyte, the whole Sundance enterprise—from the festival to the Screenwriters Lab, the Filmmakers Lab, and the Producers Conference held throughout the year—provides an important apprenticeship that is lacking in both Hollywood and the film schools. "It encourages a controlled, step-by-step process," she says. "The film industry would be in real trouble without Sundance."

Patricia Thomson is editor of The Independent.

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IN AND OUT OF PRODUCTION

ELLEN LEVY

W. H. Auden called M.F.K. Fisher "the best prose writer in America." Certainly she gave the language new flavor, legitimizing the art of eating in a land marred by McDonald's. **M.F.K. Fisher: Writer with a Bite** (28 min., video) is an intimate and provocative portrait of the artist as an octagenarian, exploring the creative process through conversations with Fisher just before her death in 1992. Incorporating Fisher's juicy anecdotes about sex, aging, compulsiveness, and *raison d'etre*, this nontraditional documentary by Kathleen Wheater employs experimental narrative and layered voice-over to explore the creative process and the nature of artistic nourishment. M.F.K. Fisher was a longtime contributor to the *New Yorker*, author of 16 books of nonfiction, and an authoritative translation of the French gastronomical volume *Physiology of Taste*. *M.F.K. Fisher: Writer with a Bite*, 329 Bryant St., Ste 3C, San Francisco, CA 94107; (415) 442-0443; fax: (415) 777-4551.



Author M.F.K. Fisher is profiled in a new documentary by Kathleen Wheater.

Courtesy filmmaker

Pop-mythologist Joseph Campbell once opined that "a temple is a landscape of the soul." Missouri-based video artist Van McElwee's **Fragments of India** (7:45) adapts the adage to the realm of video, translating the formal elements of Indian temples into moving pictures. McElwee combines the sounds of India with the images of Hindu, Muslim, and Jain architecture to create a moving picture that marries video and architecture. Funding was provided in part by the Government of India in cooperation with the Archaeological Survey of India, New York State's Experimental TV Center, and the Southwest Alternate Media Project. *Fragments of India*, Van McElwee, 7117 Nashville, St. Louis, MO 63117-2336; (314) 781-1091.

With a pistol-gripped Bolex movie camera slung in a leather holster on his hip, reclusive Vietnam vet Cinema Sid is out to shoot an epic film. Haunted by ghosts of Hollywood and Southeast Asia, Sid wanders the New Jersey Meadowlands in a converted bus, filming a hazily conceived epic based on *La Strada*. On the move and on the fringe, Sid meets art student, go-go dancer Cassandra and falls in love in **Crazy Street** (16mm), currently in production by Jersey filmmaker Bruce Paynter. To cut production costs, Paynter is developing and workprinting the film on his own, with equipment bought second-hand and set up in a 1500 square foot factory space in New Jersey. "Who can afford to pay the lab costs?" says Paynter, "I'm going to do it myself." *Crazy Street*, Bruce Paynter, 40 Marion Rd, Montclair, NJ 07043; (201) 340-1545.

What is it like to be a woman with a beard? To call oneself a feminist while actively performing in a carnival sideshow? Tami Gold's experimental documentary **Juggling Gender: Politics, Sex and Identity** (27 min., video) explores the fluidity of gender identity through the person of New York City performance artist Jennifer Miller. Miller, the "Bearded Woman" at a Coney Island side show, is also an alternative circus director and feminist. Through interviews, verité footage, and performance, *Juggling Gender* challenges viewers to reconsider the terms "feminism" and "woman," and the relationship between notions of identity, sexual orientation, and politics. *Juggling Gender*: Tami Gold, 13 Bellaire Dr, Montclaire, NJ 07042; (201) 509-0234.

As a slave, Annie Mae Hunt spent her days "catchin' babies," pickin cotton in East Texas, and working in other people's homes; as a free citizen she labored for close on two decades as a seamstress, an Avon lady, and an activist for black voter registration. **Guts, Gumption, and Go-Ahead**, a documentary drama by Dallasites Cynthia Salzman Mondell and Allen Mondell, recreates the oral history of this extraordinary woman using archival footage, music, and Hunt's own words. Based on the book *I Am Annie Mae*, a collection of personal interviews with Hunt, edited by Ruthe Winegarten, *Guts, Gumption, and Go-Ahead* is out of production. Through dramatic recreation, letters, archival photographs, and period music, the Mondells' **Dreams of Equality** (22 min., 16mm) dramatizes the history of the first Women's Rights Convention held in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848. A contemporary exchange between young people on sex roles rounds out the program. *Guts, Gumption, and Go-Ahead* and *Dreams of Equality*, Media Projects, 5215 Homer St., Dallas, TX 75206; (214) 826-3863; (214) 826-3919, fax.

You are struck first by their enormity: six-foot-tall human heads, hundred-foot skeletons of toucans and blue whales. Since 1963, the Bread & Puppet Theater company has been parading their giant puppets in celebration and in protest down the city streets of Europe and the U.S. Vermont-based independent Jeff Farber brings the politcially engaged troupe to the screen with his recently completed, feature-length documentary, **Brother Bread, Sister Puppet** (80 min., 16mm). Farber's film captures the troupe's signature event, the annual, day-long "Domestic Resurrection Cir-

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Punked out prodigal daughter Ramona in *Mona's Pets*, by John Allen

Courtesy filmmaker

cus," including its stunning Pageant, a vast allegorical drama presented at dusk by a cast of over 100 volunteers on a 20-acre stage of rolling fields and hills. *Brother Bread, Sister Puppet*: Cheap Cinematography Prods, Box 889, Montpelier, VT 05601; (802) 229-1145.

A middle-class family's complacency is shattered when punked-out, prodigal daughter Ramona returns home, bringing with her an army of cockroaches. **Mona's Pets** (32 min.,16mm), by Atlanta filmmaker John Allen, explores the dysfunctional dynamics as Ramona's family is forced out of hiding only to find that their closest bond is with their daughter's carapaced companions. Academy Award-nominated filmmaker Mark Mori has optioned the rights to *Mona's Pets* and joined with Allen to develop the short into a feature in late 1993. Allen is currently in postproduction with **Mr. McAlister's Cigarette Holder** (20 min., 35mm), based on a short story by noted Southern novelist Mark Steadman. *Mona's Pets* and *Mr. McAllister's Cigarette Holder*: John D. Allen Films, 66 Golf Circle, NE, Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 874-3369.

Twenty years after serving with the 7th Marines in the Que Son Mountains of Vietnam, Wisconsin-based videomaker Dennis Darmek returned to Southeast Asia. His nontraditional documentary, **Crossing the DMZ** (28 min., video), combines layered images and sounds to recount Darmek's journey by bus, boat, cycle, and plane from Saigon to the mountains near China. Shot on Hi8 and mastered on one-inch, the lyric video probes the emotional terrain of memory as it travels a landscape that haunts our collective past. *Crossing the DMZ*: Dennis Darmek, 2831 N. Hackett Ave, Milwaukee, WI 53211; (414) 963-9697.

Set in a fictitious town replete with 2,000 miles of bowling lanes, **Spare Me** is the darkly comic story of a volatile young bowler's search for his father. Directed by Matthew Harrison, the feature film, which is currently in production, invents a genre all its own: bowl noir. *Spare Me*: Matthew Harrison, 160 E. 3rd St, #4G, New York, NY 10009; (212) 673-3335; fax: 254-8240.

Premiered against the wall of an East Village building, Jim Fealy's **Mosaic Man** (26 min., 16mm) profiles New York City street artist Jim Power and his work: mosaics on lampposts and walls throughout the East Village. Working guerilla-style, without city permits or approval, Power is an underground artworld celebrity. The artist comments on his work and subjects ranging from squatting to gentrification to recycling, providing a portrait of an urban pioneer. *Mosaic Man*: Lucky Dog Pictures, 188 Suffolk St, #3B, New York, NY 10002; (212) 228-0215.

One of the most significant events in American labor history, the Homestead Steel Strike of 1892, had profound repercussions for workers throughout the United States. Filmmakers Steffi Domike and Nicole Fauteux employ journalistic accounts, court and other records, participants' autobiographical accounts, poetry, song, and fiction to evoke the the strike and its century-old legacy in their documentary **The River Ran Red**. *The River Ran Red*: Nicole Fauteux, (212) 421-4789.

Vermont Is for Lovers (90 min., 16mm), by Vermont-based filmmaker John O'Brien, is a picturesque and whimsical story about a New York City couple's nontraditional wedding and premarital angst amidst the sheep and shearing of pastoral Vermont. Contrasting the Reagan eighties with remnants of rural America, *Vermont Is for Lovers* strives for a new cinematic form: the Folk Film. *Vermont Is for Lovers*: Bellwether Films, Landgoes Farm, Tunbridge, VT 05077; (807) 889-3474.

In 1985, Jimmy Carter and a group of volunteer carpenters arrived on New York City's Lower East Side to help reconstruct a burned-out tenement. **The Rebuilding of Mascot Flats** documents the arduous process of converting the abandoned 85-year-old tenement into 19 low-income cooperatively owned and managed apartments. The experiences of the inexperienced homesteaders provide a moving story and a model for affordable housing. *The Rebuilding of Mascot Flats*: Josephine Dean Productions, 205 West End Ave, New York, NY 10023; (212) 874-2120.

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ASPEN FILMFEST, Sept. 29-Oct 3, CO. Fest "celebrates today's diverse & exciting ind. films," incl. latest in feature, foreign, doc & short films. Entries judged on concept & execution, originality & creativity, style & technical excellence. All features & shorts (under 10 min.) completed after June 1, 1992 eligible. Fest in 15th yr. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm. Entry fee: $25. Deadline: July 10. Contact: Susanne Hines/Mary Mullane, Aspen Filmfest, Independent Films, Box 8910, Aspen, CO 81612; tel. & fax: (303) 925-6882.

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 8-17, IL. Sponsored by Facets Multimedia & founded in 1984, competitive fest searches for outstanding entertainment films, videos & TV programs for children. Entries screened by 2 ind. juries; one composed of children, other composed of filmmakers, critics, educators & parents. Both look for "content which speaks to culturally diverse audiences & is humanistic, non-exploitative & non-violent." Awards: children's jury best live action/animation; best feature-length live action/animation; best shorts (30-60 min., 10-30 min., under 10 min.); live action/animation, Liv Ullman Peace Prize, Festival Award for Intercultural Understanding, Audience Award to most popular film. Prod. must be completed since 1991. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on cassette. Deadline: June 1. Contact: Chicago International Children's Film Festival, 1517 W. Fullerton Ave, Chicago, IL 60614; (312) 281-9075; fax: (312) 929-5437.

CHICAGO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, October, IL. Now in 29th yr, fest is one of largest US int'l competitive fests, programming films & videos produced in preceding 2 yrs. Cats: feature (Midwest premieres); doc (arts/humanities, social/political, history/biography); short subject (drama, humor/satire, films for children, experimental); student (comedy, drama, experimental, nonfiction, animation); ind. video (short, educational, animation, feature, experimental, music video); ind. video doc (arts/humanities, social/political, history/biography); mixed film/video (short, doc, educational, animation, feature, experimental); educational (performing/visual arts, natural sciences/math, social sciences, humanities, recreation/sports); animation; TV prod; TV commercial. Awards: Gold Hugo (Grand Prix); Silver Hugo; Gold & Silver Plaques; Certificates of Merit; Getz World Peace Award. Each yr features over 125 films from several countries, tributes, retros & special programs. Entry fees: $25-225. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Chicago Int'l Film Festival, 415 N. Dearborn St, Chicago, IL 60610-9990; (312) 644-3400; fax: 0784.

HAWAII INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 28-Dec. 11, HI. Founded 12 yrs ago, HIFF, under permanent theme "When Strangers Meet," aims to promote cross-cultural understanding among peoples of Asia, N. America & Pacific through presentation of free films, discussion, workshops, symposia, special awards & media events. Has grown into one of premiere cultural attractions in Hawaii w/ int'l impact. Entries of any length in all genres, incl. experimental, short, doc, feature accepted; interested in US & world premieres. In 1992, fest presented 125 films from 20 countries on 47 screens across 6 Hawaiian Islands. Special programs for 1993 incl. New Asian Film Discoveries, Environmental Film/Video Series, First Films, Children/Family Film Series, Indigenous Voices in Film, Made in Hawaii (made in or about Hawaii). Entry fee: $25. Deadline: July 30. Contact: Film Selection Coordinator, Hawaii Int'l Film Festival, 1777 East-West Road, Honolulu, HI 96848; (808) 944-7635; fax: (808) 949-5578.



This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser, director of the FIVF Festival Bureau. Listings do not constitute an endorsement. Since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. In order to improve our reliability and make this column more beneficial to independents, we encourage all film- and videomakers to contact FIVF Festival Bureau with their personal festival experiences, positive and negative.

INDEPENDENT FEATURE FILM MARKET, Sept. 27-Oct. 4, NY. Now in its 15th yr, this is only market devoted to new, emerging American ind. film. Held at Angelika Film Center, market is attended by over 2,500 filmmakers, distributors, TV & home video buyers, agents, development execs & fest programs from US & abroad. Submissions accepted in cats of feature films (over 75 min.), short films (under 60 min.), works-in-progress (edited scenes, trailer, intended for feature length), script (copyrighted, for feature length film). Separate membership & entry fees apply; all applicants must be current IFP members. Deadline: July 30 (discount deadline: July 9). Contact: Independent Feature Project, 132 W. 21st St, 6th fl, New York, NY 10011; (212) 243-7777; fax: 3882.

MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL, October, CA. Now celebrating 16th edition, noncompetitive fest showcases new US ind. work & int'l films. Last yr 100 films shown in 60 separate programs, many W. Coast premieres avail. for distribution. Features, shorts & docs accepted; program also incl. 3-day Videofest. Audiences over 22,000. Fest interested in works demonstrating commitment to & dealing w/ social issues. Entry fee: $12. Deadline: June 30. Contact: Mark Fishkin/Zoe Elton, Mill Valley Film Festival, Mill-Creek Plaza, 38 Miller Ave, Ste 6, Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-6256; fax: 8606.

NEW YORK FILM FESTIVAL, October 1-17, NY. As major int'l fest & uniquely NY film event, 31-yr-old prestigious noncompetitive fest programs approx 25 film programs from around world, primarily narrative features but also docs & experimental films of all lengths. Shorts programmed w/ features. Audiences usually sell out in advance & incl. major NY film critics & distributors. Press conferences after each screening w/ directors, producers & actors. Must be NY premieres. Presented by Film Society of Lincoln Center & held at Alice Tully Hall at Lincoln Center. Fest also programming 2nd edition of week-long video sidebar at Film Society's Walter Reade Theatre at Lincoln Center. All lengths considered; no film-to-video transfers. No entry fee; film- & videomakers responsible for r/t shipping fees for preview. Deadline: early July. Appls avail. in May; when requesting appl, specify for film or video sidebar. Contact: New York Film Festival, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza, New York, NY 10023-6595; (212) 875-5610; fax: 5636.

ROBERT FLAHERTY FILM SEMINAR, Aug. 7-13, NY. Now in 39th yr, held at Wells College in Aurora, NY, seminar provides opportunity for artists, scholars, curators, students & critics from US & abroad to view & discuss diverse forms of ind. film & video. 1993's program curated by Margarita de la Vega Hurtado/Chon Noriega (comprehensive look at Latino & Latin American media arts, incl. New Latin American cinema, gender issues, sexuality & culture, exile cinema; relation between Latin American & Latino media arts); John Columbus (experimental/conceptual to nontraditional doc films/videos which represent ind. visions & diverse artistic social & cultural issues presented in Black Maria Festival); Louis Massiah (new aesthetic approaches among film- & videomakers from African diaspora & reflected in experimental approaches to biographical doc, new narratives, new production collaborations). Contact: Sally Berger, exec. director, International Film Seminars, 305 W. 21 St, New York, NY 10011; (212) 727-7262; fax: (212) 691-9565.

VIDEO TUSCULUM, November, TN. Designed "to encourage & recognize creative & artistic use of home video equipment by ind. videographers, middle school, high school & college students. Pieces are judged for production quality, creativity & continuity." Last yr's winning entries featured at this yr's Sinking Creek Festival in June. Fest hopes to get larger response from middle school & high school students. Contact: Wess duBrisk, Video Tusculum, Tusculum College, Tusculum Station, Greeneville, TN 37743-9997; (615) 636-7300.

Foreign

FESTIVAL DEI POPOLI INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF SOCIAL DOCUMENTARY FILM, November, Italy. As one of longest-running all-doc film fests in world, Festival dei Popoli will be in its 33rd yr in 1993. Program incl. Competition Section & sections on Film & Art, Film & History, Cinema on Cinema, New Trends, Ethno-Anthropology, Current Events & Screen of Sounds. Fest accepts docs completed after Sept. 1, 1992, which cover social, political & anthropological issues. Awards: Best Doc (lire 20,000,000); Best Research (lire 10,000,000); Best Ethnographic Doc (Gian Paoli award); Best Doc nominated by Student Jury (Silver Award from Ministry of Educatio). Award money paid to directors after awarded film/video formally deposited in fest archive. Fest also retains some free use nontheatrical rights for college & univ. exhibition. Entrants pay r/t shipping for preselection; for selected prints, entrants pay shipping to Italy; fest covers customs expenses & return shipping costs. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Contact: Mario Simondi, Festival dei Popoli, Via dei Castellani 8, 50122 Florence, Italy; tel: 39 55 294 353; fax: 39 55 213 698.

QUEBEC INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF SCIENTIFIC FILMS, Sept. 23-30, Canada. Int'l competition for best recent scientific films & videos. Offers public screenings in Quebec City & Montreal, special evening lectures, programming for young people, fest on tour. 8 award cats: scientific film & video; French language TV

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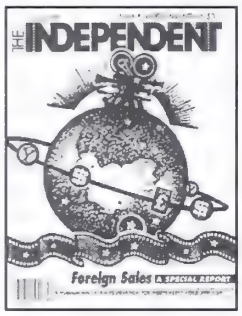
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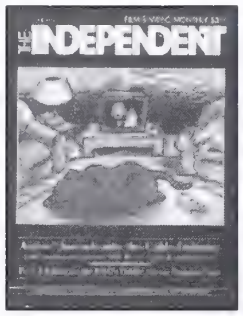
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programs; the environment, science/nature; institutional/corporate film/video, Quebec film or video, best film of scientific research, best film for young people. 1992 fest received 180 films from 19 countries, of which 60 were selected for program (25 in competition). Entries must have been produced after Jan. 1, 1991. No entry fee. Films avail. only in English may be French-subtitled at fest expense. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: May 30. Contact: Herve Fischer, Festival du Film Scientifique, 15, de la Commune ouest, Montreal (Quebec), Canada H2Y 2C6; (514) 849-1612; fax: (514) 982-0064.

SAN SEBASTIAN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 16-25, Spain, Now in 41st yr, fest will incl. competition (18 features); Zabaltegi (open zone) which shows 30-40 films; a complementary section showing films from other fests, first films & films made by members of jury; 3 retros (William Wellman, Boris Barnet & homage to filmmakers & stars who would be 100 in 1993); films for children. Cash prize: $350,000 for first & second film ("operas primas"). Narrative, experimental or experimental/doc accepted. Films must have been completed since Oct. 1, 1992 (Aug. 1992 for Zabaltegi), not theatrically released in Spain, broadcast on Spanish TV or shown in competition at other European fests for competition or any film competing for the "operas primas" award. Selected films shown w/Spanish subtitles which are responsibility of director. Directors of selected films & actors in some cases invited; fest covers r/t expenses & 5 nights at hotel. Format: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 1/2". Deadline: June 1. For information about fest & how to apply, contact: Berenice Reynaud, California Institute of the Arts, School of Film & Video, 24700 McBean Pkwy, Valencia, CA 91355; fax: (805) 253-7824.

TOKYO INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 24-Oct. 3, Japan. Main sections of 6th edition of competitive fest are Int'l Competition & Young Cinema Competition. Estab. filmmakers eligible for awards in int'l competition: Grand Prix, Special Jury Prize, Best Director, Best Actress/Actor, Best Artistic Contribution, Best Screenplay. Young Cinema Competition selects winners from entries by young or upcoming directors (35 yrs or younger w/no more than 3 features commercially released or first work of a director, no age limitation). Awards: Tokyo Gold Prize (¥20 million); Tokyo Silver Prize (¥10 million), Tokyo Bronze Prize (¥5 million). Program also incl. special invitational screenings, Best of Asian Films, Nippon Cinema Now & new film market. Formats: 35mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: June 15. Contact: Tokyo International Film Festival, Asano No. 3 Bldg, 2-4-19 Ginza, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104, Japan; tel: 81 3 3563 6305; fax: 81 3 3563-6310.

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SONY BVW-200A w/ or w/out award-winning camera-man. One-piece Beta SP unit is smallest, w/best resolution & sensitivity avail. Vinten tripod, DP light kit, monitor, mics. Priced according to project. Call Scott Sinkler. (212) 721-3668.

PROFESSIONAL VIDEO COVERS. Design, layout & typesetting by artist. Reasonable rates. Portfolio avail. Anne, (212) 873-5857.

ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY, frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" column in *The Independent* & other magazines, offers legal services to film & video community on projects from development thru distribution. Reasonable rates. Contact Robert L. Seigel, Esq. (212) 545-9085.

AWARD-WINNING CAMERAMAN w/ 16mm Aaton, Betacam SP & Steadicam, looking for challenging projects. Partial client list: ABC Sports, Atlantic Records,

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DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY avail. for dramatic 16 or 35mm prods of any length. Credits incl. *Metropolitan.* Call to see my reel. John Thomas (201) 783-7360.

BETACAM PKG (reg. or SP) w/ tripod, lights, mics, shotgun & van avail. Award-winning cameraman & crew avail. Fast & reliable. Broadcast quality. Call Eric (718) 389-7104.

CAMERAMAN w/ equip. Credits incl. 4 features (35 & 16mm), news & doc (CBS, BBC, PBS), ads, industrials & music vids. 16mm & Betacam pkgs w/ lights, mics, crew & van. Strong visual sense. Personable & reasonable rates. Call for demo. Eric (718) 389-7104.

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CINEMATOGRAPHER looking for interesting projects. Owner of an Arri 16SR & other camera & lighting equipment. Call Ralph, (718) 284-0223.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ awards, talent & experience. Credits incl. features, commercials, industrials, docs, shorts & music videos. Owner of Aaton 16mm/super 16 & Betacam pkgs. Call for my reel. Bob, (212) 255-8868.

Preproduction

BUDO, a low-budget feature, is forming its crew. Shooting is for three weeks in July & August. Deferred payment contracts. All positions avail. Send resumé to BUDO Prods., 245 8th Ave, Ste 199, New York, NY 10011.

FEATURE SCRIPTS & treatments sought by ind. NY prod. company for development. Fresh & offbeat welcome; not looking for Die Hards or Pretty Womans. Merry Dinosaur Productions, c/o Jim Rider, 727 Fulton St, Brooklyn, NY 11217.

STORY & SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT: For more powerful & meaningful stories, call mythology, creativity & script consultant Geoffrey Hill, author of *Illuminating Shadows: The Mythic Power of Film.* Featured on BBC, E! & NPR. From initial idea to finished screenplay, call (310) 271-7779.

COMPLETE BETACAM SP PACKAGES. lights & sound included. Experienced crews avail. Reasonable rates. Larry Scharf Productions. (212) 431-0887.

Postproduction

BRODSKY & TREADWAY: Super 8 & regular 8mm film-to-video masters, scene-by-scene to 1" & Betacam. By appointment only. New tel.: (508) 948-7985.

TRANSCRIPTIONS/TRANSLATIONS & interpretation in English, Spanish & French by native speakers. Call (212) 477-0688; beeper: (212) 404-9462.

COZY & CHEAP, Sony 3/4" off-line system for only $450/week. W. 57th St location. Call Jane (212) 929-4795 or Deborah (212) 226-2579.

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OFF-LINE AT HOME! Will rent 2 Sony 5850s w/ RM440 or RM450 edit controller & monitors. Low monthly rates, $650/wk. Answer your own phone & cut all night if you like! Betacam SP location crews avail, too. John (212) 245-1364 or 226-7686.

3/4" SONY OFF-LINE editing sys. delivered to you & installed: $500/wk; $1,600/mo. 5850, 5800, RM440, 2 monitors. Or edit in my space, 30th & 8th Ave. Betacam SP Sony BVP70/BVV5 3-chip prod. pkg. Tom (212) 279-7003.

16MM EDITING ROOM & OFFICE space for rent in suite of inds. Fully equipped w/ 6-plate Steenbeck & 24-hr access. All windowed & new carpet. Located at W. 24th St & 7th Ave Reasonable rates. Call Jeff at Film Partners (212) 366-5101.

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PROFESSIONAL DISCOUNTS FOR AIVF MEMBERS

The following is a list of companies that offer discounts to AIVF members. Call for more details: (212) 473-3400.

Best Shot Video
1136 East 55th St. New York, NY 10022
(212) 319-5970 Contact: Adam Shanker

Bill Creston
727 Ave. of the Americas (at 23rd Street)
New York, NY 10010
(212) 924-4893 Contact: Barbara Rosenthal

Camera Mart
456 West 55th St. New York, NY 10019
(212) 757-6977 Contact: Shimon Ben-Dor

Cutloose Editorial
30A West 94th St. New York, NY 10025
(212) 678-2560 Contact: Bruce Follmer

L. Mathew Miller Associates, LTD.
48 West 21st St. New York, NY 10010
1-800-221-9328 or (212) 741-8011
Contact: Steve Cohen

Mill Valley Film Group
397 Miller Avenue, Suite 2
Mill Valley, CA 94941
(415) 381-9309 Contact: John Antonelli

PrimaLux Video
30 West 26th St. New York, NY 10010
(212) 206-1402 Contact: Matt Clarke

Rafik
814 Broadway New York, NY 10003
(212) 475-9110 Contact: Mr. Rafik

Studio Film & Tape, Inc.
630 Ninth Ave
New York, NY 10036
(212) 977-9330 Contact: Bill Eiseman
or
6674 Santa Monica Blvd.
Hollywood, CA 90038
1-800-444-9330 Contact: Carol Dean

STS
316 F. Street, NE, Washington, DC 20002
1-800-426-9083 Contact: Patrick Skeham

Technicolor Inc., East Coast Division
321 West 44th St. New York, NY 10036
(212) 582-7310 Contact: Ray Chung

Video Arts Systems and Technology, Inc.
P.O. Box 433 Manasquan, NJ 08736
(201) 223-5999 Contact: Nicholas G. Kuntz

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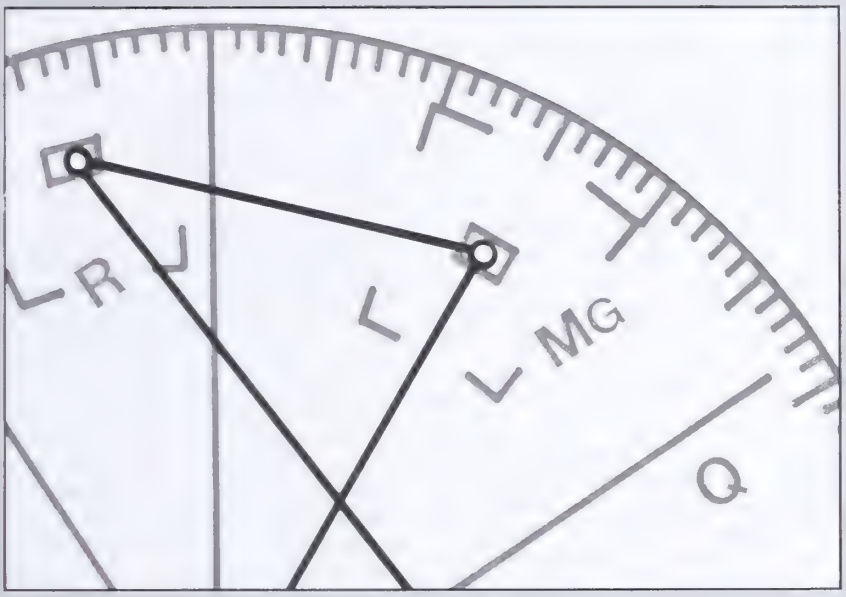
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Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length. Deadlines for Notices will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., May 7 for the July issue). Send to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Conferences ▪ Seminars

AMERICAN FILM AND VIDEO ASSOCIATION celebrates 50th anniv. in 1993. Special events incl. 35th American Film & Video Festival & Conference, May 26-30, Chicago. Theme: "New Technologies: Frontiers of Media Production" w/ demos of new tech, workshops on intellectual freedom, copyright/fair use, library security systems, etc. Contact: AFVA, Box 48659, Niles, IL 60714; (708) 698-6440.

MONTAGE 93: Int'l Festival of the Image celebrates fusion of art & tech & explores future of visual communications, July 11-Aug. 7, NY. Exhibitions, trade show, lectures, symposia and arts performances. Call for info: (800) 724-4332.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MEDIA ARTS CENTERS (NAMAC) conference, Rewiring Our Networks, June 3-6, Chicago. Cosponsored by AIVF. To register, contact: NAMAC, 1212 Broadway, Ste 816, Oakland, CA 94612; (510) 451-2717.

NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL MEDIA MARKET, CA, May 19-21. Only media market in country specifically designed for buying & selling doc, educational & special interest media. Also, seminars and workshops on funding, distribution, new tech & market trends (May 18-23). Contact: (510) 465-6885.

REPLITECH INT'L presents 3-day conference & expo for duplicators & replicators of video & audio tape, optical discs & floppy disks, June 15-17, Santa Clara, CA. Contact: Benita Roumanis, Knowledge Industry Pubs, 701 Westchester Ave, White Plains, NY 10604; (914) 328-9157; fax: 9093.

SOUTHEASTERN MEDIA INSTITUTE will take place July 24-August 6. Sponsored by S. Carolina Arts Commission Media Arts Center, institute, in fifth year, offers intensive professional media workshops in cinematography, video production, video editing, directing & producing. Weekend seminars include scriptwriting, film criticism, low-budget narratives, grants for film/video & producing the personal doc. Reduced rates for registration by July 2. Campus housing available. For brochure, contact: S. Carolina Arts Commission Media Arts Center, 1800 Gervais St, Columbia, SC 29201; (803) 734-8696.

YELLOWSTONE MEDIA ARTS Summer Workshops, May 24-June 25, MT. Intensive workshops offered in the heart of the Rockies, incl.: (May 24-June 4) Intro to Digitized Photography; From Manager to Mogul: Playing the Producer's Game; Stereography: Historical & Contemporary 3-D Photography; (May 24-June 11) Advanced Screenwriting; (June 5-6) Film Directing; (June 7-18) Images of Women; (June 7-25) Contemporary European Film & TV. Contact: MSU Summer Session, 303 Montana Hall, MSU, Bozeman, MT 59717; (406) 994-6683.

Films ▪ Tapes Wanted

AXELGREASE, wkly public access program, seeks experimental, narrative, animation, doc & computer imaging under 27 min. Showcases video & film on Buffalo access & around US. Send 1/2", 3/4", Beta, 8mm, or Hi8 tapes to: Axlegrease, c/o Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo Media Resources, 372 Connecticut St, Buffalo, NY 14213; (716) 884-7172.

BAD TWIN, NY-based prod./exhibition collective, seeks films under 30 min. for ongoing programs in Europe & US. Alternative approaches to all genres & forms welcomed. Must have finished 16mm prints avail. Submit VHS only for preview; incl. SASE for return. Contact: Bad Twin, Box 528, Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276.

BEYOND "BODY": ANIMATE & INANIMATE gallery show is accepting video works (15 min. limit). Fee: $15; $5 for each additional w/ no limit. Deadline: June 1. Send 1 copy of VHS tape w/ SASE to 494 Gallery, 494 Broadway, New York, NY 10012; (212) 925-9841.

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable TV System, seeks works by ind. video & filmmakers for access airing. BRONXNET produces programs &, whenever possible, facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, (718) 960-1180.

CABLE ACCESS SHOW seeks short drama, doc, animation & experimental films/videos. Interested parties should send 3/4" copies to: Quick Flicks c/o Eugene Haynes, 814 10th Ave, #3A, New York, NY 10019 or call (212) 642-5236.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video art interstitials to play btwn alternative music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTER FOR NEW TV seeks 3/4", VHS or Hi8 work for cable access show. Contact: CNTV, 1440 N. Dayton St, Chicago, IL 60622.

CENTRAL AMERICAN NEWS PROJECT seeks indivs to produce news & public affairs pieces for monthly access show on Central America. Contribute footage or contacts w/ people in CA w/ film or video equip. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St, Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks works on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Laura Greenfield, Cable TV Manager, City TV, 1685 Main St, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (213) 458-8590.

COMEDY CENTRAL seeks comedic student/ind. films & videos up to 3 min. to air on its flagship program, Short Attention Span Theater. Must have broadcast rights. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes to: Josh Lebowitz, HBO Downtown Prods., 120 E. 23rd St, 6th fl, New York, NY 10010; (212) 512-8851.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER accepts 3/4" Beta & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Tanya Steele, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St, New York, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on varied subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, Ste 4768, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10112.

FLICKTURES seeks 2-5 min. comedy prods, any genre, any style, to air on L.A. cable access; possible deferred pay. Send 3/4", 1/2", Beta or super 8 w/ SASE to: Flicktures, c/o Barker/Morgan Prods, 12039 Allin St, Culver City, CA 90230-5802.

LESBIANS IN THE CREATIVE ARTS invites submissions of original works for an Evening w/ LICA video cabaret. Artists must own all rights. Contact: Video, Ste 443, 496A Hudson St, New York, NY 10014.

LITTLE HORN PICTURES seeks ind. produced shorts for public access program. Doc, drama, animation. Any length up to 45 min.. Student work welcome. Send VHS preview tape to: Little Horn Pictures, c/o Eric Rogers, 600 McCall Rd, Greenville, SC 29607; (803) 967-0854. Incl. producer's name, address & phone number.

MINORITY TELEVISION PROJECT, Bay Area multicultural public TV station, invites programming from ind. directors, producers & writers who have person of color in key creative position & present crosscultural perspectives. Children's, entertainment, animation, features, health, education & lifestyles sought. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes (orig. must be on 3/4" or 1" for broadcast.) to: John Weber, programming director, 1311 Sutter St, San Francisco, CA 94109; (415) 394-5687.

NATIVE VOICES seeks proposals for 2 half-hour cultural affairs progs by/for Montana Native Americans. Contact: Native Voices Public TV Workshop, Dept. of Film & TV, Montana State University, Bozeman, MT 59717; (406) 994-6223.

NOMAD VIDEO seeks works from videomakers of all ages, backgrounds & skill levels for monthly screenings. Screenings showcase grassroots artists at changing locations around Seattle area. Send VHS, S-VHS or Hi8 & SASE to: Gavin the Nomad, 501 N. 36th St #365, Seattle, WA 98103; (206) 781-0653.

OPEN CITY cable series invites indivs., groups & orgs. to submit proposals to produce new cable programming, which will air on *Artwaves*, Hallwalls' weekly cable access program. Open City provides honoraria, production & post facilities and technical assistance for indivs. to produce programming of interest to diverse communities in Western New York. Include 1-page project description, time-frame for production and postproduction & applicant's technical experience. Three projects will be selected. Applicants must be residents of Erie, Niagara, Allegany, Cattaragus, or Chautauqua counties. Student projects not eligible. Contact: Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center, 700 Main St, Buffalo, NY 14202; (716) 854-5828.

PACIFIC ARTS seeks selected domestic & foreign ind.

projects—narrative, animation, doc, experimental & performance—to air on wkly cable access show. Any theme, any length. Projects credited. Submit 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Pacific Arts, Box 533, Farmington, MI 48332-0533.

PERALTA COLLEGES TV, multicultural educational station reaching 200,000 homes in Oakland-Berkeley area, seeks challenging social-issue docs & culturally diverse TV programs. Rare alternative outlet in Bay area. Excellent exposure. Submit 3/4" or VHS tape w/ short description & letter granting local cablecast rights to: PCTV programming, 900 Fallon St, Oakland, CA 94607; (510) 464-3253.

PMS (POST-MODERN SISTERS), nat'ly touring exhibition program, looking for innovative & challenging short films by women for future programs. Contact: Lisa Austin, (415) 648-3810 or Susanne Fairfax, (415) 751-3507.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests non-commercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, PO Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

QUICK FLICKS, NYC ind. cable access TV show, seeks short subject drama, doc, animation & experimental films & videos. Send 3/4" U-matic copies to Quick Flicks c/o Eugene Haynes, 814 10th Ave, #3A, New York, NY 10019; (212) 642-5236.

REEL TIME, monthly film series at Performance Space 122, seeks experimental, doc & narrative films. Submit super 8 & 16 mm to: Jim Browne, c/o Reel Time, P.S. 122, 150 1st Ave, New York, NY 10009; (212) 477-5288.

TOONTOWN RATS, Artists TV Access' new animation forum, seeks animated shorts. Send submissions to: Artists Television Access, 992 Valencia St, San Francisco, CA 94110; or contact Keith Knight, (415) 752-4037/824-3890.

TRUEVISION seeks entries for its eighth annual Truevision Videographics Competition. Winners taken on road as part of multimedia event. Eighteen cats include abstract, impressionalism, realism, surrealism, graphic illustration, broadcast commercial video & business presentations. Also still image & animation competitions for students. Image must be produced w/ Truevision graphics engine. Video segments limited to 3 min.. Deadline: June 4. For info, contact: Truevision Inc., 7340 Shadeland Station, Indianapolis, IN 46256-3925; (800) 344-TRUE.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, cablecast on Drexel University's channel 54, seeks narrative, animation, exper., performance & doc works by young filmmakers from Philly & elsewhere. Show reaches 767,000 households in 3 states. Contact: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St, Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

VIRTUAL FOCUS seeks submissions of doc, narrative & art videos for monthly public screenings. Send VHS copies to: Virtual Focus, 6019 Sunset Blvd, Ste 133, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 250-8118.

VISIONS OF U.S. Video Contest seeks entries from teens, young adults & children who use the medium to express viewpoints about a myriad of issues. Sponsored by Sony Corporation & administered by American Film Institute. Deadline: June 15. For info & entry brochure, call (213) 856-7743 or write Vidons of U.S., Box 200, Hollywood, CA 90078.

WILLOW MIXED MEDIA seeks Amiga-based works for Amiga Artists on the Air, prog. distributed on cable access & video. Small fee. Submit material on 3.5" Amiga disks, VHS, 3/4" tape to: Toby Carey, Willow Mixed Media, Box 194, Lenox Ave, Glenford, NY 12433; (914) 657-2914.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database which incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & biographical data. Contact: Helen Lee, Women of Color in Media Arts Database, Women Make Movies, 225 Lafayette, Ste 207, New York, NY 10012; (212) 925-0606.

WYOU-TV, cable access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for wkly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St, Madison, WI 53703.

Opportunities ▪ Gigs

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE seeks f/t asssistant for film & video program dept. Assistant will work w/ head of film & video in daily operations of dept. Museum's nationally recognized programs explore all aspects of the moving image, incl. independent & experimental film/video, Hollywood & int'l features, silent films, animation, etc. Responsibilities incl. booking & shipping films & tapes, making arrangements for visiting speakers & filmmakers, researching upcoming programs, assisting w/ prep of museum calendar, clerical duties. Candidates should have strong writing skills, degree or course work in cinema studies & exp. in film/video programming. Salary commensurate w/ experience. EOE. Send resumé, writing samples & salary requirements to: Head of Film & Video, American Museum of the Moving Image, 35 Ave at 36 St, Astoria, NY 11106. Deadline: June 1. Start date: July 1, 1993.

ADELPHI UNIVERSITY, located 18 miles from Manhattan, seeks ass't professor to teach film & video & to direct professional internship program. Req.: exp. teaching media prod. from technical & creative perspective, knowledge of film/video art, history & analysis & substantial body of work. Must appreciate changing nature of undergraduate instruction & have interest in redefining relation btwn general education & specialized study in all disciplines. Send letter of appl., resume & philosophy of teaching prod. to: Dean William Eidson, College of Arts & Sciences, Adelphi University, Garden City, NY 11530.

MEDIA ALLIANCE board of directors now accepting resumés for Executive Director of NY State media arts membership organization. Works w/ membership-elected board, staff & membership committees to develop and facilitate collaborative services; promote work of members; & advocate for media arts field. Must have skills in networking, communication, fundraising, fiscal management; offer knowledge and experience in ind. media arts & able to work w/ diverse constituency. Send resumé to: Search Committee, Board of Directors, Media Alliance, 356 W. 58th St, New York, NY 10019.

SARAH LAWRENCE COLLEGE seeks to fill half-time, tenure-track position to teach filmmaking as part of liberal arts curriculum. Candidate should have ability to teach both beginning & advanced classes & indiv. as well as group studies. SLC is a small liberal arts college located north of NYC. Send resumé & 3 letters of reference (films not requested at this stage) to: Janet Held, faculty secretary, SLC, Bronxville, NY 10708. Women & people of color encouraged to apply.

WORLD CONGRESS ON BIOMEDICAL COMMUNICATIONS announces a call for participation. Organized by medical imaging & communication societies from around world, conference expected to draw professionals from media production, computer graphics, etc., to address the theme of Global Images in Health & Science. Deadline: June 1. For abstract entry form, contact: World Congress Meeting, Professional Conferences, 25 Mauchly, Ste 305, Irvine, CA 92718; (714) 753-8680.

Resources ▪ Funds

CPB's REIMAGINING AMERICA series: Independent & ptv station minority producers may submit proposals for research & dev. of a series for nat'l bdcst on PBS. $500k allocated for this multicultural programming solicitation. Deadline: June 9. For guidelines, call CPB TV Program Fund (202) 879-9600.

CREATIVE TIME sponsors projects by visual & performing artists as part of ongoing citywide series. Proposals reviewed every 3-4 mo. Send 5 copies of project description; description of desired public site; technical assessment, incl. consideration of vandalism, security, projects material stability & utilities description; resumés of all participants; budget; up to 10 slides of past work of each participant w/ accompanying descriptions; 1/2" or 3/4" video of past work, no longer than 5 min., w/ explanatory notes; sketches & drawings to clarify proposal & SASE to: Creative Time, 131 W. 24th St, New York, NY 10011-1942; (212) 206-6674; fax: (212) 255-8467.

FILM PRESERVATION PROGRAM, joint program of Nat'l Endowment for Arts & Nat'l Center for Film & Video Preservation at American Film Institute, awards grants to help orgs preserve & restore films of artistic or cultural value. Tax-exempt orgs can apply. Must have archival film collection, adequate staff & equipment to carry out project. Grants are matching, generally less than $25,000. For appl. & info, contact: AFI/NEA Film Preservation Program, National Center for Film & Video Preservation at AFI, John F. Kennedy Center, Washington, DC 20566; (202) 828-4070.

FIRST FILM FOUNDATION, charitable foundation based in London, offers assistance, expertise & contacts in A/V industry for new talents w/ 1st film project for TV or cinema. All genres, incl. animation. Contact: First Film Foundation, Canalot Production Studios, 222 Kensal Rd, London W10 5BN, England.

FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR PROGRAM for US faculty & professionals offers grants for research & lecturing in nearly 135 countries. All disciplines eligible, incl. humanities, arts, social & physical sciences & journalism. Assignments range from 2 mo. to 1 yr. Multi-country research possible in many regions. Appls encouraged from ind. scholars & professionals outside academe. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Council for Int'l Exchange of Scholars, 3007 Tilden St, NW, Suite 5M, Box NEWS, Washington, DC 20008-3009; (202) 686-7877.

FULBRIGHT PROFESSIONAL FILM & TV FELLOWSHIP offers professional mediamakers an opportunity to pursue extended work in the UK in 1994-95. Minimum 3 yrs professioanl experience & US citizenship required. Applicants design program of creative work, combining professional & artistic work w/ contributions to community (e.g., workshops, lectures, etc.). Proposals of purely academic nature ineligible. Awards £12,000 &

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travel expenses for 6-9 month stay. Deadline: Aug 1. For appl., contact: (202) 686-7878 & leave mssg. For info: Karen Adams (202) 686-6245 or Jane Mangan (202) 686-6242 or write to UK Film & TV Fulbright Award, CIES, 3007 Tilden St, NW, Ste 5M, Box F-UKF, Washington, DC 20008-3009.

HANOVER SQUARE Prods 1993 Feature Film Screenplay Competition is accepting appls. Awards $20,000 each to a maximum of 5 writers. All genres, but must have commercial viability. Deadline: June 1. For appl., send SASE to: Feature Film Screenplay Competition c/o Hanover Square Productions, 7510 Sunset Blvd, Ste 241, Los Angeles, CA 90046. For info, contact John Edwards (310) 288-6326.

INDO-US SUBCOMMISSION on Education & Culture offers long-term (6-10 months) & short-term (2-3 months) awards for 1994-95 research in India. All disciplines, except clinical medicine, eligible. Applicants must be US citizens w/ Ph.D. or comparable professional qualifications. Those w/ limited or no prior experience in India especially encouraged to apply. Deadline: Aug. 1. For appl. or info., contact: Council for Int'l Exchange of Scholars, 3007 Tilden St, Suite 5M, Box INDO-NEWS, Washington, DC 20008-3009; (202) 686-4017.

INTER-MEDIA ARTS CENTER offers local graphic artists w/ exp. in 3-D animation and 2-D graphics free access to equipment for participation in collaborative arts projects. Org. has 3/4" A/B/C/D roll computer, chroma-key, computer graphics & 3-D animation systems. Call Michael Rothbard, IMAC executive dir., (516) 549-9666.

JEROME FOUNDATION funds indiv. film & video artists living & working in NYC metro area. Appls. accepted any time, reviewed 3x/yr. Contact: Jerome Foundation, W. 1050 First National Bank Building, 332 Minnesota St, St. Paul, MN 55101; (612) 224-9431.

MEDIA CENTER FOR VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP offers 1-month residencies for media artists living in US, designed to allow artists facilities & time to pursue their work. Access to facilities, living space & $1,000 honorarium provided. Artists chosen on basis of work sample & suitability of VSW's facilities. Students not eligible. Submit current resumé; sample of finished work that demonstrates innovative use of audio; descriptive statement about work sample; description of residency project; and how facilities will be used in final presentation. Deadline: June 12. Contact: Artist-in-Residence Program, Visual Studies Workshop, 31 Prince St, Rochester, NY 14607; (716) 442-8676.

MID ATLANTIC ARTS FOUNDATION supports arts administrators through its Visual Arts Travel Fund. Applicants must be administrator or curator of nonprofit visual or media arts org. in Mid-Atlantic state. Travel grants awarded for 50% of documented expenses incurred to attend an event (max. $200). Deadline: 6 wks before event or dates of travel. For guidelines contact: Michelle Lamuniere, VAP Associate, Mid Atlantic Arts Foundation, 11 East Chase St, Ste 2A, Baltimore, MD 21202; (301) 539-6656.

NATIONAL LATINO COMMUNICATIONS CENTER provides funds to producers of Latino programs suitable for nat'l public TV broadcast. Grants are for all stages, research through post-production & outreach. Contact: NLCC, 3171 Los Feliz Blvd, Ste 201, Los Angeles, CA 90039; (213) 663-8294, fax: 669-3456.

NEW YORK COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES Media Projects—pioneering effort to bring together films on

video, filmmakers & scholars in public forums throughout NYC—seeks proposals for programs. Events feature presentations at screening by filmmaker or scholar, framed by talk & discussion. $350 honorarium to filmmaker, $250 to scholar w/ up to $150 addt'l in travel expenses. For appl. contact: NYCH, 198 Broadway, 10th fl, New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-1131.

NO BUDGET FEATURE FILM SCRIPT COMPETITION. 20 film professionals have joined together to provide writer/director w/ labor & equip to produce 1st feature. Preproduction planning, crew & low-budget 16mm pkg provided to winner. Deadline: May 15. Send 2 copies of suitable low-budget scripts w/ SASE to: Adolph Gasser, Rental Services, 750 Bryant St, San Francisco, CA 94107. For guidelines & appl. info, send SASE to above address.

O.T.O.L. VIDEO invites producers to edit projects on video at its Southern CA facility. Submit synopsis of project, cover letter describing financing plan & brief description of principal people involved. Sample reel can be submitted. For more info, contact: O.T.O.L. Video, 1800 Stanford St, Santa Monica, CA 90404; (310) 828-5662.

PENNSYLVANIA HUMANITIES COUNCIL supports humanities projects throughout state. Strong PA connection required, either in subject matter or producer residence. Preliminary proposal drafts 6-8 weeks in advance of deadline recommended. Deadline: October 1. For appl., contact: PHC, 320 Walnut St, Ste 305, Philadelphia, PA 19106-3892; (215) 925-1005.

PHILADELPHIA FILM & VIDEO ASSOCIATION (PIFVA) offers subsidy program to help complete ind. noncommercial films/videos/audio works by PIFVA members based in greater Philly area. Grants paid directly to facilities for lab/facility services at discounted rates as negotiated by artist. Avg. grant: $500; max. $1,000. Deadline: June 15. For appl., contact: (215) 895-6594.

SCRIPPS HOWARD FOUNDATION scholarships awarded to f/t undergrad & grad students preparing for careers in communications industry. Scholarships range from $500 for freshmen & sophomores to $3,000 for seniors & grad students. (513) 977-3035.

TRAVEL GRANTS PILOT, joint project of NEA & Arts International, enables artists to engage in collaborations, create new work, explore developments in field, etc. with colleagues in Africa, Latin America, Caribbean & South or Southeast Asia. Welcomes proposals aiming to strengthen links with cultures of origin or establish new ties with other cultural communities. Deadline: May 14. Grants range from $500-$2,500, max $5,000. For appl., contact: Travel Grants Pilot, Arts Int'l/IIE, 809 U.N. Plaza, New York, NY 10017; (212) 984-5370.

WESTERN STATES REGIONAL MEDIA ARTS FELLOWSHIPS award up to $7,000 for new works & works-in-progress by artists in AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY & Pacific Territories. Deadline: June 5. For info, contact Portland Art Museum Northwest Film Center (503) 221-1156.

WOMEN IN FILM FOUNDATION FILM FINISHING FUND awards grants from $25-50K for completion & delivery of work consistent w/ WIF's goals: at least 50% of prod personnel must be women, subject matter must relate to women & be of general humanitarian concern & project must be broadcast quality for exclusive 1-yr. or 4-broadcast exhibition rights on Lifetime Cable. For guidelines, contact: Lifetime TV Completion Grant, WIFF, 6464 Sunset Blvd, Ste 900, LA, CA 90028.

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AIVF BOARD NOMINATIONS EXTENDED

Nominations for AIVF Board of Directors has been extended! *You now have until June 11 to nominate a fellow member (or yourself) to run for the AIVF board!* Members outside of New York State are especially urged to submit names of potential nominees.

AIVF board members serve a two-year term and are expected to attend eight board meetings (four per year), which are held in New York. Board members are also expected to serve on at least one of the board committees.

Please note the following nomination procedures:

1) You must be a current member of AIVF.

2) The person you are nominating must also be a current member.

3) Write down the nominee's name, address, and phone number.

4) Your nomination must be seconded by another member in good standing. (Please include the name and phone number of the member who has seconded this nomination.)

5) Mail your nomination to our office: AIVF, 625 Broadway, NY, NY 10012. Attn: Stephanie Richardson, or you may fax them to (212) 677-8732.

6) All nominees will be notified by June 18th with instructions for submitting election statements.

Hurry! Friday, June 11th will be here before you know it! Phone nominations will also be accepted! *Sorry*, student members are not eligible to serve on the board. Look for election ballots in your mail.

1993 MEMBERSHIP SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the membership survey that was inserted in the January/February issue of *The Independent* and mailed to recently lapsed members have been tabulated. We want to thank those who responded—over 600 of you—and want to share some of the survey results.

Our replies came from 53% men and 45% women. While the majority (78%) indicated they were Caucasian, 14% checked off other categories: African American (5%), Asian American (4%), Latino (4%), and Native American (1%). The annual income level of respondents spanned the gamut, but 35% earned between $15,000 and $29,999 per year and 24% earned between $30,000-$49,999. The majority (59%) indicated they derived 75-100% of their income from media-related work. The percentage of replies from filmmakers (62%) and videomakers (59%) showed there is a great deal of overlap between the two media. Twenty-three percent of the respondents advised us they teach. Media skills were learned primarily in a college/university setting (64%) or were self-taught (55%).

The top reasons respondents cited for belonging to AIVF were *The Independent* (87%), information services (53%), advocacy (48%), festival/distribution bureau (48%), a sense of community (46%), and an opportunity to network (41%).

The most popular choices selected from the list of possible new programs and services that AIVF could develop over the next three years were a national job bank (50%); local activities, such as coffee klatches, screenings, special interest groups (46%); spotlighting regional media activity in *The Independent* (45%); publishing a membership directory (45%); and a mentor program (42%).

The information in the survey supports the feedback gathered in a series of informal meetings with members across the country. It is invaluable to us a we plan for the next few years. Again, a big "thank you" to everyone who responded.

HEALTH INSURANCE UPDATE

Attention New York State AIVF members: As of April 1, the Entertainment Industry Group Insurance Trust (TEIGIT) will no longer sell health insurance to New York State residents. As a result of changes in New York State insurance laws, TEIGIT will dissolve its current plan to New York members as of September 1st. (*Members outside of New York State may continue to apply to TEIGET for insurance.*) New Yorkers with TEIGIT policies should contact Bill Diamond at TEIGET immediately for additional information: (212) 758-5675.

In addition, the materials New York members received from the Diamond Associates Group Insurance Trust (DAGIT) were mailed to you in error. *This policy does not apply to New York State residents.* We regret any confusion this mailing may have caused.

New York State members interested in an insurance policy through AIVF will still have the option of applying with Mutual of Omaha. Please contact our representative Jeff Bader for details on this plan: (212) 557-6500. We will be looking into alterative plans for our New York members and will announce our findings in upcoming issues of *The Independent.*

MOVING?

Please call and let us know! *The Independent* is sent out third-class bulk rate and *will not be forwarded* to your new address. Once we are notified of a change of address, it may still take up to four weeks to take effect. Back issues are not always available if you don't notify us of a change of address. So call in your new address. It's the easiest, fastest way to insure you'll receive your magazine and other important mailings. (212) 473-3400.

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In upcoming issues

Regional Spotlight: Chicago

In the June issue *The Independent* will kick off its tri-annual regional spotlights with a special issue devoted to Chicago mediamakers

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Media Education

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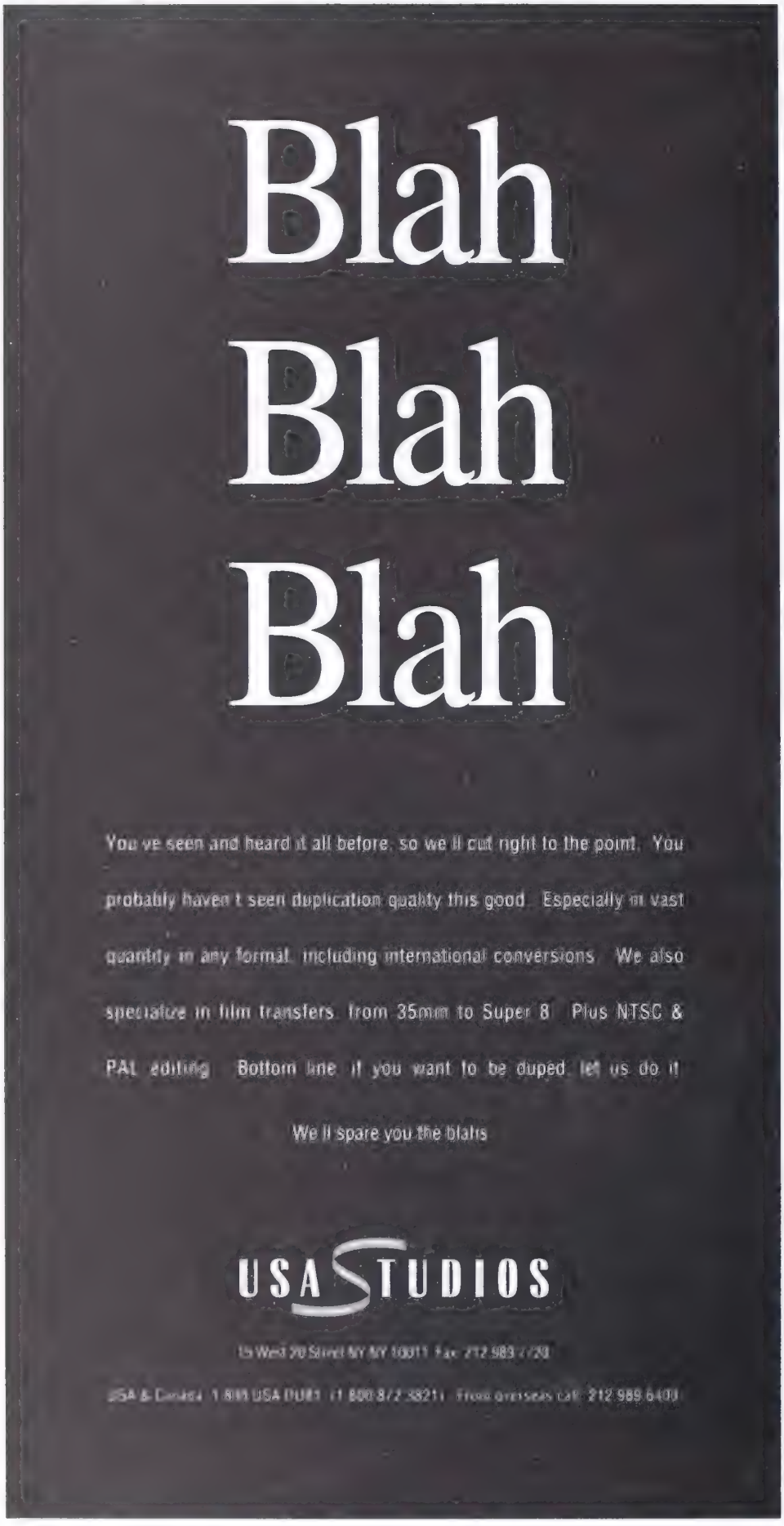
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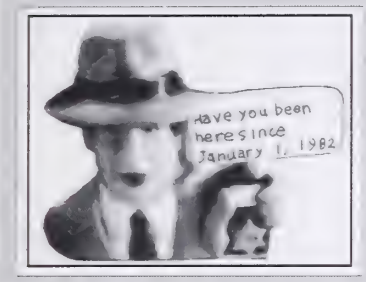
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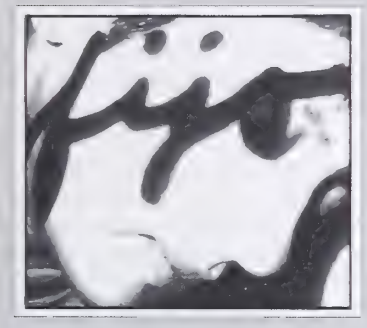
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COVER: This month *The Independent* kicks off its regional spotlight section, which will highlight independent production in various parts of the country several times a year. This issue is devoted to Chicago. To the general public, Chicago calls up images of old-style gangsters, big machine politics, blues music, and the world's first skyscrapers. To mediamakers, it's a city identified with a strong political documentary tradition, community-based video, and the development of image-processed video art. Our look at the production activity and milieu of The City That Works begins on page 16. Photo: Peter Schulwz, courtesy City of Chicago.

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TOO LITTLE, TOO LATE?

Miles and Rosenblum Defend *Liberators'* Accuracy

Despite well-publicized charges that they fudged facts and misled viewers in their PBS documentary *Liberators: Fighting on Two Fronts in World War II*, filmmakers Bill Miles and Nina Rosenblum told *The Independent* in recent telephone interviews that they continue to stand behind the accuracy of their film about the role of black soldiers in the liberation of Holocaust concentration camps.

Liberators, a 1992 Academy Award nominee for Best Documentary, aired last November as part of the PBS *American Experience* series. In addition to documenting segregation and racism within the U.S. Army circa WWII, the film chronicles the history of two all-black combat units—the 761st Tank Battalion and the 183rd Combat Engineers Battalion—including the role of the units in liberating two of the largest concentration camps, Dachau and Buchenwald.



Just the facts, please: In *Liberators: Fighting on Two Fronts in World War II*, Bill Miles and Nina Rosenblum set out to chronicle the history of two all-black combat units they say liberated two German concentration camps. The filmmakers, however, did not anticipate the onslaught of negative publicity they received following the documentary's release.

Courtesy WNET TV

The film was withdrawn from further PBS circulation in February by New York affiliate WNET, which helped produce it, after controversial articles were published in *The Washington Times*, *The New York Times*, *The New Republic*, and other publications. In the articles, critics of the film, ranging from the American Jewish Committee to some veterans groups and several historians, charged Miles and Rosenblum with misrepresenting facts. Although most agreed black soldiers played a role in liberating WWII concentration camps, the critics charged that the all-black units depicted in the film did not liberate the notorious Dachau and Buchenwald camps, although they may have liberated some smaller ones.

"The attack came so hard and fast, and tended to be one-sided," says Rosenblum, who believes the media coverage was unbalanced. "Detractors crying 'inaccuracies' failed to interview the liberators or survivors depicted in the film," she explains. "They were called liars without representation, while our [Miles' and Rosenblum's] letters to the editor regarding press coverage of the controversy were not printed." Rosenblum notes that while the film is titled *Liberators*, journalists repeatedly refer to it as *The Liberators*, an error that suggested the film claimed the black soldiers as the *only* liberators of the camps.

Since February's media blitz, the veracity of the filmmakers' account has been further called into question. E.G. McConnell, one of the two 761st soldiers featured prominently in *Liberators*, told *New York* magazine that not only did his unit not liberate the camps, he had never even been to Buchenwald until PBS flew him there to film a "reunion" between a survivor of the camp, himself, and another 761st veteran. Several other 761st veterans not featured in the film have also disputed liberating the camps. White veterans' groups historically credited with liberating the camps have spoken out against the film, while journalists and WWII historians have produced maps and historical records as evidence that the 761st could not have liberated the camps because it was nowhere near them at the time.

Despite these claims, Miles and Rosenblum maintain that their film does tell the truth—albeit a truth that many people are apparently unwilling to hear. "Since the film aired, we've had many calls and letters from survivors saying they remember seeing black soldiers and from black soldiers saying they participated in liberating [Dachau and Buchenwald]," says Miles, whose career has spanned a teenage stint as a film projectionist at the Apollo to an adulthood as an award-winning documentarian of African American experiences. "We talked to veterans and survivors who were at Dachau and Buchenwald, and they believe they know the difference between black and white," he adds.

The filmmakers believe forces of New York

"You cannot deny a man's own experience," Rosenblum explains. "If you have five people at different parts of the camp, they may not have observed the whole situation."

politics may have spawned the onslaught of negative publicity. Only one month after *Liberators* aired on national television, when it was embraced by black and Jewish leaders after a much-publicized screening held at the Apollo Theater in Harlem and was about to be distributed throughout the New York City school system, did the widespread controversy begin.

Rosenblum says she finds WNET's "failure of nerve" in withdrawing the film frustrating, and notes that it continues to be supported and shown widely at international film festivals as well as across the U.S., where liberators and survivors featured in the film were scheduled to appear at screenings in conjunction with April's National Holocaust Month. Rosenblum also reports support from a number of journalists, writers, historians, and from organizations such as the Anti-Defamation League (ADL). The ADL is sending Johnny Stevens, a 761st Tank Battalion veteran who participated in the liberation of Buchenwald, to speak around the country.

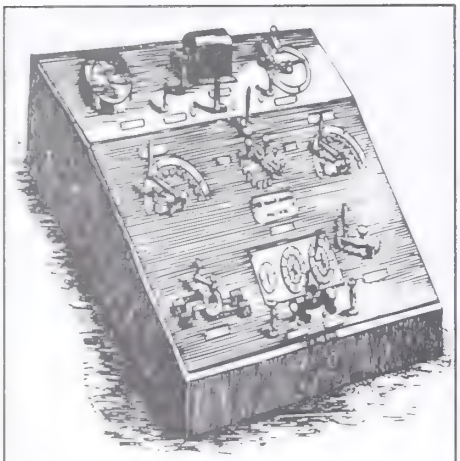
The filmmaker maintains that the veterans and survivors depicted in *Liberators* have every right to express their memories of the liberation, and that viewers have a right to see them. "There are many different perspectives of what happens in history... and the history of the Holocaust should not be viewed as closed," she explains. "You cannot deny a man's own experience," she adds. "If you have five people at different parts of the camp, they may not have observed the whole situation."

Too often, heated dispute over facts has occurred at the expense of the film's message, says Rosenblum. "By focusing on the controversy, the press has tended to cover the meaning and the impact of the film. Nobody is even mentioning the first three quarters, which have to do with racism in the U.S. during the WWII years."

As of yet, WNET has not concluded its review and has refused to comment on the film or the

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internal investigation. The filmmakers are urging that this process be as swift as possible. (One reason is that distribution in schools has been put on hold pending the review.) No matter what happens, nothing will detract from the knowledge that the film has brought forward, says Rosenblum.

For Miles this is no small feat. "All of a sudden [after making such a film as *Liberators*], there is an awareness that blacks have been astronauts, and liberators, and cowboys. And what has been previously unknown or missing from the pages of history will perhaps someday end up in school books."

LAURIE OUELLETTE

Laurie Ouellette works with the Institute for Alternative Journalism and writes about media and culture for the alternative press.

NEW CULTURE NETWORK PREPS FOR 1994 START-UP

Thanks to emerging technologies and FCC regulations, the 75-channel cable system that we've all just started to master will explode into an unlimited spectrum of channels in the next few years. Such a wide array of channels seems mind-boggling, but anyone who has tried to get tickets at the local art house theater on a Saturday night will be glad to know that three Washington, D.C.-based entrepreneurs have launched the New Culture Network (NCN), a channel that may stand apart from the dial-and-spend and prayer networks that threaten to dominate the airwaves. NCN plans to showcase independent works 24 hours a day.

Charles Giffin, the channel's president, David Thomas, vice-president of marketing, and William Bordak, programming director, originally intended to start an independent production company. But after Thomas realized how difficult it was for independent productions to reach the public, the company decided to start a cable channel that would provide a forum for independent work.

Surprisingly, NCN is a for-profit venture funded by private investors. This suggests that the channel's founders see independent film not only as a cultural bonus, but as a commodity in demand. Indeed, Bordak states that "independent films are not in a good situation right now. The money for independent production is decreasing while audiences are growing." Thomas says that the channel will be geared toward urban viewers in their twenties and early thirties, "somewhere between MTV and Bravo audiences. We're trying to be an alternative to various religious networks that are appearing" as a result of the increase in channels. Thomas says he expects the channel to begin cablecasting in late 1994 in urban centers with a high percentage of its target audience.

According to Bordak, the channel currently has the rights to several documentaries, shorts, and features. He states that although none of the films the channel has acquired have recognized titles, he is currently putting together agreements for higher-profile works. The majority of the channel's films will have had no domestic theatrical distribution. Thomas expects NCN to have a broad mix of programming; the channel will show any film "as long as it's independent and non-exploitative." Bordak adds that he has no problem acquiring films that are several years old. The channel can make concrete offers for a finished film, and also offer a letter of intent to a filmmaker with a trailer stating that NCN is interested in acquiring the rights to the finished product.

In addition to standard programming, the channel's founders are thinking of providing other related services to subscribers. One related venture involves a separate channel on which viewers can receive information on obtaining copies of obscure independent shorts and features. "It's not like the Home Shopping Network, but cable subscribers could get things they couldn't get anywhere else," says Thomas. NCN is also investigating a possible working relationship with art house theaters, and as soon as the channel gets some cash flow, Thomas hopes to finance in-house productions and start a fund to aid works-in-progress. There are already plans to have production facilities on-site.

As art houses close down (and lines get longer) NCN may provide a valuable service to independent film lovers with an inclination toward laziness. And at a subscription price of $2.50 to $3.00 a month, NCN could be an economical alternative.

Thomas states that he and his partners are "looking for films at a feverish pace." Unsolicited program submissions (on 3/4" or VHS) can be sent to: William Bordak, New Culture Network, 2909 Stanton Ave, Silver Springs, MD 20910.

WENDY GREENE

Wendy Greene is a freelance writer living in Brooklyn, New York.

EURO COPRODUCTION MARKET MEANS BUSINESS

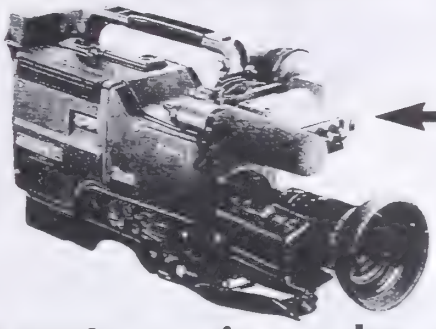
From June 13 to 16, producers, directors, and financiers from the U.S., Australia, Canada, and Europe will convene in Cologne, Germany, to participate in the International Coproduction Market in Europe (INCOME).

The market's selection procedure involves an application, due in mid-April, and a fee of DM700 (roughly $400). The admissions process for the market is rather competitive because, as Dieter Kosslick, the market's executive director, told *The Independent*, too many filmmakers running around will produce much of nothing. (Three years ago when he ran the European Coproduction Market in Hamburg, close to 400 people attended and as a result, he said, the market was not as successful as it could have been.)

Although one of INCOME's organizers, Gerald Miesera, described INCOME as a "lonely hearts

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Luis Valdovino's 1990 documentary *Work in Progress* uses interviews, stock footage, and image processing to explore the effects of the 1986 Immigration Reform upon illegal immigrants in the U.S. The film is one of many soon to be available to educators through the Latin American Video Archive (LAVA).

Courtesy International Media Resource Exchange

club," for the fortunate 100 filmmakers handpicked to attend it could be an excellent opportunity.

Miesera explained that in addition to the filmmakers, there will be approximately 70 financiers (private television stations, banks, completion bond companies, and other funding sources) in attendance who will be looking to meet filmmakers. Representatives from Miramax and Fine Line have also been invited, thus providing filmmakers with access to greater venues of financing and distribution.

Of particular interest is the geographical distribution of the attending filmmakers. Given that American independents are always searching for foreign investors (since there is so little money at home), it is easy to assume that they would flood the market. However, the organizers have predetermined a quota system that will permit only between five and 10 percent of the attendees to be American.

Those invited will represent "middle-sized companies that will fit with European, Canadian, and Australian companies," says Kosslick. The purpose of the market—focused on uniting filmmakers, producers, and financiers with realistic options for coproductions—resembles the Independent Feature Film Market, but INCOME appears to have a greater sense of purpose than an industry jam session.

If by chance you applied to INCOME this year and were not selected, or if this is the first you have heard of the market, don't despair; the organization behind the market, Filmstiftung Nordrhein-Westfalen GmbH, provides funding year-round.

The Filmstiftung (Film Foundation) was founded in 1991 to promote filmmaking in the area of North Rhein-Westphalia in northwest Germany. With an annual budget between $25 million and $30 million, the foundation will fund five to six "low-budget" (under $6 million) independent features annually. The foundation is funded by the state of North Rhein-Westphalia and Europe's largest television station, Germany's WDR.

Kosslick is very clear that the purpose of the foundation is to encourage filmmakers (and other artists) to use the North Rhine-Westphalia location for their productions. Ultimately, the foundation is looking for quality projects that can be internationally coproduced. While there is a great deal of financing available, Kosslick says, "We do not want to have the feeling that the American independents grab the money and make [off with it]."

To protect itself from "take the money and runners," the Filmstiftung has established a number of stipulations. For example, to receive money specifically for scriptwriting or development purposes, the project's producer or screenwriter must be from the Westphalia area.

The foundation will invest up to 65 percent of the production's overall budget, which should not exceed DM1 million, and the recipient is required to pay the loan back to the local Westphalia producer (not the Filmstiftung) if the film is commercially viable. Television films are fundable provided they are internationally coproduced, geared towards an international audience, and use HDTV technology (still foreign to many Americans). For production funding of features, money is available provided "there is reason to believe that the film will be a commercial success in the cinema" and that the producer shoots in Westphalia.

The Filmstiftung will also assist in uniting coproduction teams, if need be. Filmmaking grants are also available. The committee meets monthly to determine the feasibility of each project (script/treatment) within its guidelines. The grants provide an opportunity for any producer/director team or individual searching for coproduction money with a script in tow. And while the foundation is firm about its restrictions, filmmakers should take the time to investigate how their projects might fit within the foundation's guidelines.

The Filmstiftung has an informational booklet that outlines funding procedures. To receive a copy, contact: Filmstiftung Nordrhein-Westfalen

GmbH, Kaistr. 14, Dusseldorf 1; tel: 49-211-93-0500; fax: 49-211-93-0505.

ELIZABETH RICH

Elizabeth Rich is a filmmaker living in New York City.

LATIN AMERICAN DATABASE EDUCATES EDUCATORS

With the explosion of small format video, many people in Central and South America have documented their lives and thoughts without the assistance of a foreign lens. Unfortunately, many of these producers are not hooked into the U.S. educational film and video market. So how can academics, in ivory towers for most of the year, locate their works? Starting in September, they will be able to access the Latin America Video Archive (LAVA), a database created by the International Media Resource Exchange (IMRE).

Karen Ranucci, IMRE's executive director, traces the origins of the database to her days working for NBC News. "When I worked with NBC, I was amazed Americans were learning about Latin America from U.S. producers who didn't even understand Spanish, and who never imagined there were Latin Americans producing media about themselves," Ranucci continues. "LAVA is a way to reverse the usual North-South flow of information."

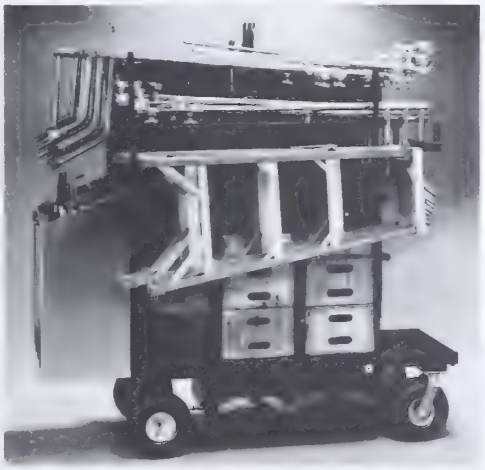
For more than a year, IMRE, a nonprofit networking and resource center, has researched and catalogued video (and film available on video) made by Latin Americans and U.S. Latinos. This centralized information source makes these tapes more easily accessible to educators and programmers by linking them to producers and distributors. IMRE's database focuses on tapes available for distribution in the U.S. and therefore contains information on independent film and video distributors who offer relevant titles.

While compiling the database, Ranucci has found many works without U.S. distribution. But rather than exclude them, IMRE has become their distributor and now has nonexclusive contracts for about 30 works.

Currently, 1,664 titles are included on the database and an additional 368 are being evaluated by academics from a variety of disciplines (film, video, anthropology, Latin American studies, etc.). By the end of 1993, LAVA hopes to have 2,500 titles available on-line through various computer networks, including PeaceNet. In addition, IMRE is working with a commercial publisher to print a reference book using information from the database. The book, to be completed by year's end, will help locate works by subject and serve as a curriculum guide. Beginning either in September 1993 or January 1994, IMRE also plans to publish a bimonthly newsletter aimed at the educational market, which will feature tapes that can be linked thematically.

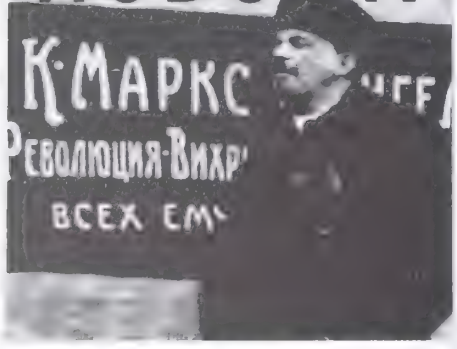
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Another of IMRE's major goals is to increase the number of Latin American works available to U.S. audiences. A big stumbling block for many small format, low-budget works, Ranucci says, is the need for translation and subtitling. To combat the problem, IMRE has developed a model program by collaborating with language departments in universities. First, language students translate the dialogue, which is reviewed by a professional translator, and then a bilingual TV professional checks that the written script can be matched to the soundtrack. Finally, professors in communications departments work with students to subtitle the tapes.

IMRE currently offers a free telephone information service that provides basic data about the tapes and information designed to help educators and programmers select and use the tapes more effectively. To date, 234 academics have volunteered to evaluate the tapes, a process conducted with an eye toward incorporating the works in the classroom. The initial response has signaled to IMRE that U.S. educators are hungry for media made by people in Central and South America. Museums, festival programmers, librarians, distributors, and broadcasters have also requested information and access to the database.

By collaborating with educators, students, and cinéastes who travel to Latin America, IMRE plans to continue identifying and collecting Latin American-made materials that are currently unavailable in the U.S.

The support of New Video Resources and the MacArthur Foundation has enabled LAVA to get up and running. "But," Ranucci says, "the project really owes its success to the many individuals and groups who have contributed their time and expertise to it."

Film- and videomakers or distributors wishing to have their works included in the database should contact Karen Ranucci at (212) 463-0108.

MARY JANE SKALSKI

Mary Jane Skalski is the office manager of Good Machine, an independent production company in New York City.

COLORADO CONFERENCE INCLUDES GAY FILMS

Aspen, Colorado, is probably the last place one would expect to see films depicting gay and lesbian lifestyles these days. But with Amendment Two of Colorado's Bill of Rights, which, passed last November, prohibits local anti-discrimination laws designed to protect lesbians and gay men, organizers of the International Design Conference, held annually in Aspen, decided to take action rather than watching their attendance figures plummet. When designing a film program to accompany the conference, to be held from June 13–18, Wendy Keys, executive producer/programming for the Film Society of Lincoln Center, chose to focus exclusively on gay rights.

Although the initial theme of the [Colorado design] conference was reconstruction, Keys says that "in the face of Amendment Two, our focus on social issues became all the more intensified."

"The thinking behind the conference is to address social problems as well as design problems," says Keys. Although the initial theme of the conference was reconstruction, Keys says that "in the face of Amendment Two, our focus on social issues became all the more intensified." Hence the conference's board of directors, which came under fire for refusing to change the location of the event because its administrative staff and facilities are there, in November settled on a gay and lesbian film program. "Initially we discussed dealing with human rights, civil rights, and gay rights," adds Keys. But the program was just too small for such an undertaking.

Keys together with film- and videomakers selected 14 works, most of which are narratives, from the U.S., Canada, and Europe to be featured in the program. Among them are Norman Rene's *Longtime Companion* (1990), one of the few mainstream feature films to deal directly with AIDS; Rainer Werner Fassbinder's *The Bitter Tears of Petra Von Kant* (1972), about the relationships of three lesbians; James Ivory's *Maurice* (1992), the story of a man battling both social and class consciousness; Donna Deitch's *Desert Hearts* (1985), which deals frankly with the sexual relationship of two women; and Sally Potter's *Orlando* (1992), based on Virginia Woolf's novel. Also included are the documentaries *Silence=Death* (1990), the art community's call to arms in the fight against AIDS, and *Positive* (1990), both directed by Rosa von Praunheim.

Between 800 and 1,500 individuals attend the conference each year, but despite the move to program a gay and lesbian sidebar, Keys says she anticipates a "small drop" in attendance since many are boycotting the state. Still, she is pleased that the conference's board has "taken positive action rather than negative, which is what the boycott is."

MICHELE SHAPIRO

INTERACTIVE VIDEO GAMES TAP PRODUCERS

In the constantly evolving world of video game technology, American Laser Games, based in Albuquerque, New Mexico, has taken the lead in developing a new genre that could ultimately provide opportunities for videomakers and technicians.

The company has developed a process by which it shoots live-action scenes on video. The scenes are shot sequentially with a series of different outcomes and then are programmed via computer technology into interactive video games. Depending on the player's actions at specific points in the game, the storyline can branch off into one of three results. In "Mad Dog II," for example, one's skill in zapping the bad guys with a plastic laser gun will determine if he or she can: a) proceed with the game; b) go on to increasingly harder challenges; or c) pay another dollar to play again.

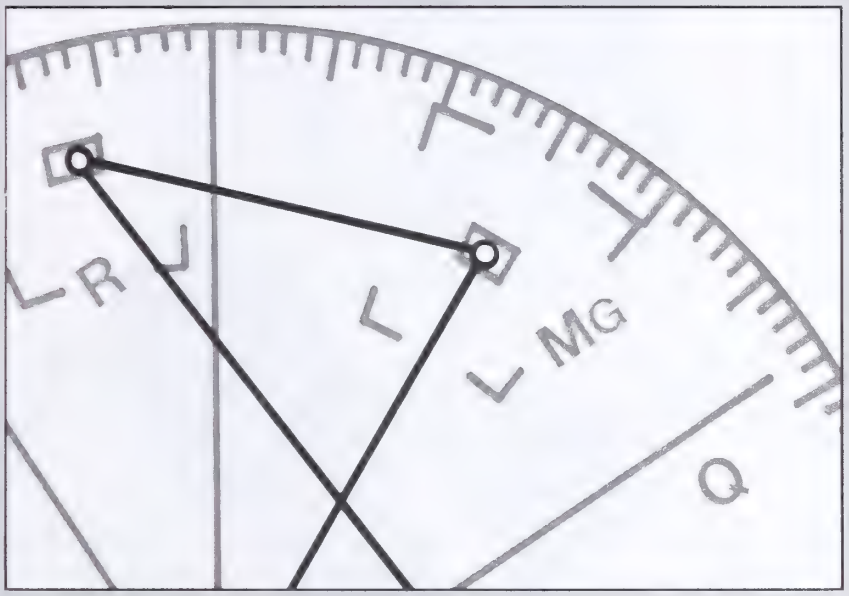
The cinematic quality of the production tends to be high. Shot either on 35mm or Beta SP, the games, currently sold only to arcades, cost from $250,000 to $1 million to produce. Each game is treated as a mini-feature with production crews of 30–35 individuals.

Back in 1988 Bob Grebe, the company's founder, was overwhelmed with the positive response he received from users of his live-action training videos for the police, which he produced in New Mexico for worldwide use. He became convinced that the same techniques could be incorporated into the shooting games then popular at video arcades. In 1990 his company produced its first game, "Mad Dog McCree," which became one of the top-grossing games in the industry, according to *Play Meter* magazine's rating of arcade game popularity. The company has since produced four other games which are part of the Sega, Nintendo, and PC Platform arcade systems, and they are now increasingly making inroads into the home consumer market. American Laser plans to introduce "Mad Dog McCree" to the home video market this month and is also exploring the possibilities for utilizing interactive technology in the educational field by creating what is being labeled "Edutainment"—teaching educational skills by interactive video games.

The company now employs 60 people out of its Albuquerque headquarters, eight of whom are involved in some aspect of video production. According to creative manager Randy Quick, all of his company's actual production work is done by Southwest Productions, located in downtown Albuquerque. Southwest, an independent production company, does some limited freelance hiring on an as-needed basis, particularly in the area of special effects.

David Roberts, Southwest's president, describes his work for American Laser as being "as high end as any production gets in New Mexico." The work accounts for 25 percent of his business, and Roberts says that when American Laser Games

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expands into the consumer market, the demand for this type of production will also grow.

Quick agrees the small-budget production will increase as other companies begin to understand interactive technology. "As it expands to other executive producers," he predicts, "so will the need for additional independent production sources."

SUZANNE ROSE

Suzanne Rose is an independent film marketer and distributor based in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

IN THE NEWS

N.Y. Dailies recently purchased all of the assets and motion picture equipment belonging to TVC Precision Film Laboratories in New York. According to Bernie Barnett, president of N.Y. Dailies, the facilities and equipment are now located at the Film Center Building. The dailies motion picture lab facility is for all format color negative motion picture film, including 35mm, super 16mm, and 16 mm.

Prelinger Archives, a New York stock footage library, recently acquired the Bay Area Archive, a unique film collection depicting the San Francisco Bay Area and the American West during the first half of the 20th century. **Hot Shots & Cool Cuts, Inc.** has announced the acquisition of exclusive stock footage rights to the Pan Am film library, which contains an assortment of archival and contemporary images from around the world, including Hong Kong, New Delhi, Australia, and Buenos Aires, and significant moments in aviation history. The company has also entered into an agreement with Hearst Entertainment whereby it will manage Hearst's stock footage licensing. The Hearst collection includes the Metrotone News library, a 1,000-hour archival that contains images and bios of 20th century luminaries, from Woodrow Wilson to Ronald Reagan.

Archive Stock Footage Library in New York has been appointed exclusive U.S. representative of France's Gaumont Newsreel, containing 6,000 hours of footage covering many of the most important political, social, and cultural events and personalities of the 20th century from Imperial China to Depression-era America.

DOUGLAS EDWARDS: 1949–1993

Douglas Edwards, 44, theater and special administrator for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences and a longtime force in specialized film programming in Los Angeles, died in February of AIDS.

Edwards had been a coordinator of film retrospectives, exhibits, and special programs at the academy since 1980, and produced more than 250 public events in Southern California, New

York, and elsewhere.

He worked for 10 years as program director of the avant-garde and experimental venue Encounter Cinema. He also served for eight years on the feature, documentary, and special program committees of the Los Angeles International Film Exhibition (Filmex). Edwards edited the newsletter *Media Arts* from 1983 to 1990 and was national film critic and L.A. editor of the *Advocate* for four years. He was also on the board of directors of the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC), the Independent Feature Project/West, and the L.A. Gay and Lesbian Media Coalition.

The 1993 NAMAC "Rewiring Our Network" Conference has been dedicated to the memory of Doug Edwards.

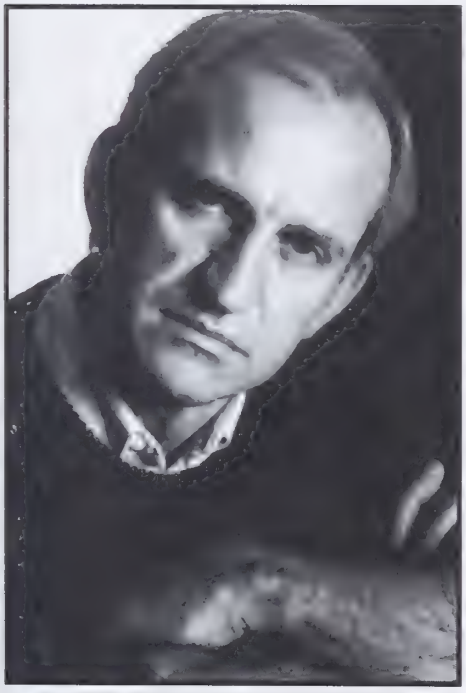
RICHARD SCHMIECHEN: 1947–1993

Richard Schmiechen, a documentary filmmaker who won an Academy Award for *The Times of Harvey Milk* in 1984, directed by Robert Epstein, died in April at age 45.

The cause of death was complications from HIV, according to David Haugland, Schmiechen's longtime companion and business partner in the New York-based independent film company, Intrepid Productions.

Besides the Oscar, Schmiechen's documentary about the life and assassination of the openly gay San Francisco city supervisor also won two Emmies, a Peabody, and the New York Film Critics Circle Award.

Schmiechen again received an Oscar nomination this year for *Changing Our Minds: The Story*



Richard Schmiechen

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of Dr. Evelyn Hooker. The film charts how a psychologist rocked the medical establishment in the mid-1950s with her theory that homosexuality was not a mental disease, as had previously been believed.

Schmiechen attended film school at Columbia College in Chicago and, before producing and directing his own documentaries, worked as a film editor with director James Ivory and documentarians David and Albert Maysles and Gordon Quinn.

With Haugland, Schmiechen also coproduced *The Portrait*, a television production starring Gregory Peck and Lauren Bacall that aired on TNT.

Other of Schmiechen's productions include *Arboreal Aviators*, *Jungle Flying Machine*, and *Nick Mazzuco: Biography of an Atomic Vet*.

SEQUELS

Mark Mori's **Coalition Against PBS Censorship** hasn't taken the pressure off PBS since its formation in January ["Coalition Blasts Self-Censorship at PBS," April 1993]. In March, 12 independents, including Mori, whose Oscar-nominated film *Building Bombs* was rejected by PBS along with numerous other documentaries, faced off with Jennifer Lawson, executive vice president of programming for PBS. Filmmakers in attendance included Fred Baker, Barbara Trent, Robin Doyno, and Jonathan Stack, among others. In April, it was announced that *Building Bombs* would air August 10 as part of PBS's *P.O.V.* series. But Mori says he signed a contract with American Documentary, *P.O.V.*'s parent company, only after a "censorship clause" was altered in the standard contract. American Documentary agreed to eliminate a phrase giving it the right to edit or modify the film "in order to comply with censorship requirements." Mori, however, is revising the film to include new material. "Because PBS refused to run this three years ago, we are now spending taxpayer money to update the film," says Mori. Apparently, the coalition has other bombs to drop on PBS, including a documentary it plans to create with footage from the Lawson meeting and a "Banned by PBS Film Festival."

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If attaining national air time is a sign of success, chock one up for the **Independent Television Service** ["ITVS's Trial By Fire," March 1993]. ITVS will make its PBS premiere on *P.O.V.* (July 13) with David Collier's *For Better or For Worse*, which follows the lives of five long-married couples. Unfortunately, a second documentary for which ITVS had high hopes, John Valadez's *Passin' It On* ["*Passin' It On* Director Files Claim Against NYPD," May 1993], was not so fortunate. According to an ITVS board member, PBS offered no concrete explanation as to why it rejected the documentary, which traces the rise and fall Black Panther movement.

✣ ✣ ✣

A dispute at the **University of Michigan Law School** that arose in October 1992 when law students ordered the removal of an art exhibit about prostitution ["Michigan Law Students Shutter Exhibition on Prostitution," March 1993] was settled nearly five months after the incident occured. The university and the seven censored video artists agreed to a settlement that will result in a reinstallation of their work. The exhibit will accompany a university-sponsored symposium covering issues of feminist theory, sexual expression, and censorship. The reinstallation will take place during the fall semester. Marjorie Heins, director of the ACLU's Arts Censorship Project, with the ACLU of Michigan and attorney Robert Carbeck, represented the artists in negotiating a settlement with law school dean Lee Bollinger.

✣ ✣ ✣

Those who read "Sound Advice: The Power of Digital Audio Workstations" in the March 1993 issue may be looking to purchase **digital audio equipment**. If so, try Digidesign in Menlo Park, CA (800-333-2137, ext. 104), Sonic Solutions in San Rafael, CA (415-485-4800, NY rep: Studio Consultants 212-586-7376), or Spectral Synthesis in Woodinville, WA (206-487-2931).

✣ ✣ ✣

Yvette Nieves-Cruz was recently named executive director of Film in the Cities in St. Paul, MN. Prior to joining Film in the Cities, Nieves-Cruz was director of the San Antonio CineFestival and served as Quincentenary project coordinator for Deep Dish Television.... **Dara Meyers-Kingsley** recently joined the staff of the Andy Warhol Foundation as director of the film and video collections. Meyers-Kingsley comes to the foundation from the Brooklyn Museum, where she served as coordinator of film and video programs since 1987.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following individuals and businesses:

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Mediamakers find a safe haven in the Windy City

Windy City, Second City, the City That Works: These are Chicago, which hugs the breezy shore of Lake Michigan. With a population of six million, Chicago is known as a town of hard-ball politics, immigrant populations, and a rich jazz and blues heritage. It's the home of the Harry Who artists, the Second City Comedy Club, and the Steppenwolf Theater; the site of the Mercantile Exchange, the El, and the world's tallest building; and the stomping grounds of Theodore Dreiser, Louis Sullivan, John Belushi, Studs Terkel, big machine mayor Richard J. Daley, and the country's first black female Senator, Carol Moseley Braun.

Chicago is also a vital center of film and video production. With this issue, The Independent *premieres its Regional Spotlights, which several times a year will highlight independent production in different parts of the country. These are by no means comprehensive reports; no city or region can be encapsulated within the pages of a single magazine issue. What the Regional Spotlights will provide is a sampling of what independent producers in a given city or region are currently up to—what kind of work, in what kind of milieu. The emphasis will be on film- and videomakers more than the institutions that support them—the media arts centers, festivals, film commissions, funders, and so on.*

This Regional Spotlight features Chicago's tradition of political documentaries, its lively feature film production scene, and its schools' various media programs. Also included are sidebars on Chicago's technological innovators and its underground music video entrepreneurs, plus seven mediamaker profiles and a list of institutional resources.

SUE TELINGATOR

If you want the lowdown on how hard it is to be an independent filmmaker in Chicago, just ask Dan Dinello, who tells this anecdote about himself and fellow filmmaker Tom Palazzolo: "Tom and I used to get deals on film. Raw stock is the hardest thing to get deals on, but sometimes Tom would meet me on lower Wacker Drive and hand over the goods. The film might have been out of date, he didn't guarantee the color would hold up, but I was able to shoot a 30-minute film when I first came back to Chicago [in the early eighties]."

Dinello's tale conveys how, at times, filmmakers are forced to work their trade in an atmosphere of desperation, like junkies eager for a fix. It also conveys something else—something that is typically "Chicago"—a certain quality that you will discover over and over, if you are lucky enough to find yourself in the community of Chicago's independent film- and videomakers. There is a sense of support and comraderie, an acknowledgement that "we're all in this together," and a desire to help others succeed at their craft.

"Filmmaking is always a struggle," says Dinello. "As far as experimental or independent work, since you're always scrounging for money and there's not that much commercial support, you look for support among other filmmakers and friends. There is a network of people who remain independent or who are extremely sympathetic to independent filmmakers—even as they cut commercials to make a living." Dinello, who has also been a teacher in Columbia College's department of film and video for 10 years, adds, "If I were coming to this city, the first thing I'd do is go to one of the schools, and I'd run into a filmmaker more than ready to sit down and talk about the network."

Dinello is not the only one to demonstrate enthusiasm for Chicago's supportive network. Jim Morrissette has been a documentary videomaker in Chicago since 1979, "when the first Sony Portapack videotape machine came out," he recalls. According to Morrissette, "The independent community here is extremely noncompetitive. We all still have a slight feeling



View of Grant Park and the Loop from Lake Michigan, where the Art Institute and Columbia College are located.
Left: Chicago's biggest Cubs fan.

Peter J. Schulz, courtesy City of Chicago; left, photo: Bill Stamets

we're underdogs. We're still trying to get our stuff produced and seen."

There are a number of ingredients that go into accomplishing the nearly impossible task, namely money, equipment, and expertise, and that's where the media organizations in this city have played their part for more than 20 years. "Media arts organizations give filmmakers access to equipment and the training to produce shows," says Morrissette. "With cable available as an outlet, people know they can get their shows shown locally. [The media organizations] also act as fiscal agents for grant monies... An individual can have problems getting grants. Organizations lend credibility to independents, and a granting agency knows a project will get done. It gives an independent a real base of operations," he says.

Among the better-known organizations that help with production are the Center for New Television, Chicago Filmmakers, and the Community Film Workshop. Many independents cite media organizations as places to get their work done at affordable rates. When videomaker Bob Hercules first started in the eighties, he was able to edit his work all night for around $40 at the Center for New Television. He got a few tapes under his belt and eventually started his own production company. Documentarian Taggart Siegel praises the media organizations for allowing videomakers to meet others who share their interests and for offering resources such as mailing lists to find others doing similar types of work.

Funding is a constant source of struggle for artists here, particularly when compared with both the East and West coasts. Many credit the National Endowment for the Arts' Regional Fellowship as being one of the few consistent resources for independents. However, the shrinking budgets of what were once funding mainstays, such as the Illinois Humanities Council and Illinois Arts Council, have caused many projects to be abandoned. Says Hercules, "There's chauvinism against the middle part of the country—most of the funding goes to the East and West coasts, especially New York. The few dollars that are available get shrunk even more. ITVS [Independent Television Service] has addressed that problem with their latest round of grants by dividing money into specific regions; it's a great idea."

Once the work is created, getting it shown can be another obstacle. While most independents agree that there should be more outlets available, many have nothing but praise for the few places that are actively promoting the local scene. Heather McAdams calls the media arts center Chicago Filmmakers "a major outlet for independents" and Taggart Siegel refers to it as "the only place you could go and get a screening fairly quickly. It's been consistent over the years. It hasn't backed off, even though it hasn't made a lot of money. The [staff is] real supportive of Chicago filmmakers." Facets Multimedia, the combined theater/video rental operation, exhibits and rents both films and videos of independent artists. Says filmmaker Chuck Olin, "In every city there are repositories like Facets that are important for a sense of history and as a gathering place for heady conversation about the medium." Other places, such as the Film Center of the Art Institute, Randolph Street Gallery, and the Music Box, screen more obscure works and have been the site of local film festivals.

Perhaps the biggest source of disappointment as far as distribution is concerned is Chicago's local public broadcasting station, WTTW. While the complaints surrounding the treatment of local independents merit their own lengthy article, suffice it to say many feel the relationship with this station is estranged. A local watchdog group, Chicago Media Watch/FAIR

"I wasn't raised a leftist," Gray noted. "My political education happened that Wednesday night outside the Conrad Hilton Hotel.Faced with this visible evidence, our belief structure collapsed. We knew from that moment on we were out of the television commercial business."

(Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting), formed last November, hopes to address these problems in a proactive manner. "It will say to WTTW, 'You claim to be a public station, but we see little evidence, little public involvement, little representation of the diversity of Chicago,'" says Hercules, one of the primary organizers of a Chicago Media Watch/FAIR subgroup focusing on WTTW.

Overall, this city has come a long way from five years ago, when it wasn't uncommon to find guest lecturers at film schools instructing local artists to make a break for the coasts. But for the tried and true who have managed to carve a niche for themselves in this city, leaving isn't an option. Says Hercules, "I'm attracted to Chicago because it's a real city filled with a million stories—a very political place. People have a good respect for Chicago. There's an acknowledgement that there is a huge array of talented artists here."

However, filmmaker Tom Palazzolo disagrees, preferring to compare this city to a hidden treasure. "A lot of people have come and gone but they don't have the resilience that I do—resilience or stupidity," he says. "It's actually getting harder to make waves in Chicago. The media look to big film schools; they produce lots of films. We're getting more and more invisible, which in some ways makes us more interesting. It makes us a more mysterious commodity."

Sue Telingator is a Chicago freelance arts writer whose most recent book, The Chicago Arts Guide, *was published by Chicago Review Press.*

Taking Politics Seriously

A Chicago documentary tradition, from the 1968 Democratic Convention to Senator Carol Moseley Braun

BILL STAMETS

Beside furnishing a full plate of subjects—blues, Nazis, mayors, unions, and art uproars—Chicago has nourished a healthy roster of documentary filmmakers. While no "Chicago School" leaps into focus, and "community" might overstate a scene that is more informal milieu than institutional matrix, many nonfiction artists have emerged and remained in Chicago, thanks to a cooperative spirit and supportive media arts centers.

Although it's hard to trace a genealogy, an historical sketch of the last 30 years of political documentary production could start with Mike Shea, who shot Chicago's first cinéma vérité documentaries. A radio operator in WWII, Shea switched to photography before leaving the Army in 1945. He shot for Chicago newspapers, then moved on to *Time*, *Life*, and *Ebony*. When he saw magazine advertisers switching to television in the early sixties, Shea handed all his still cameras over to his son and equipped himself with 16mm gear.

He bought a retooled Auricon, with a 400-foot magazine and synch improvised using a Boliva Accutron wristwatch. Self-taught, he admits to zooming the wrong way when shooting his first film in 1964, titled *And This Is Free*. Prompted by musician Michael Bloomfield, Shea documented Maxwell Street, Chicago's outdoor flea market where blues artists still jam on Sunday mornings.

Shea, now 67 and a cinematographer in L.A., shot TV commercials for J. Walter Thompson and other Chicago ad agencies. Bored with corporate routine and interested in trying out a new Sennheiser shotgun mic, he covered a civil rights march through Cicero, a white working-class neighborhood, after Martin Luther King canceled his attempt. Capturing the tense chaos from the marchers' point of view, *Cicero March* (1966) was later excerpted in *Eyes on the Prize*.

Mike Gray, now 57, was soundman for *Cicero March*. Trained in aeronautical engineering, he edited the magazine *Aviation Age* before teaming up with Shea. "By an accident of timing we arrived on the scene with no training, at exactly the moment when all of this sync sound equipment evolved," said Gray in an interview from L.A. "For a long time we were the only ones making TV commercials in the cinéma vérité idiom. The problem was the country was coming apart, and we were uniquely qualified to record this. We grew more and more hostile to our clients, like Commonwealth Edison. Thank God Joe Sedelmaier [of "Where's the beef?" fame] put us out of business."

During the 1968 Democratic National Convention, Gray and Shea were shooting a Kentucky Fried Chicken commercial. "People were telling us about the horror going on, but I didn't believe it," Gray said about the police tear-gasing and beating of antiwar protestors. Abandoning Colonel Sanders at their northside studio, Shea and Gray headed downtown to the Grant Park protests. As they unloaded their equipment from the car, a cop came by and asked, "What the fuck do you assholes think you're doing here?" Gray recalled, "I'd never been spoken to by a cop like that before."

"I wasn't raised a leftist," Gray noted. "My political education happened that Wednesday night outside the Conrad Hilton Hotel. It was literally unimaginable. Faced with this visible evidence, our belief structure collapsed. We knew from that moment on we were out of the television commercial business."

The resulting *American Revolution II* (1969) included vérité reportage on a meeting of Rising Up Angry, a progressive white youth group in a northside uptown neighborhood. Other commentary came from blacks from Chicago's south and west sides. Gray next began a documentary on the Illinois Black Panther party, though Shea moved on to New York City. The Panther project struck Shea as "propaganda." "Being an old photojournalist, I don't take sides," he said.



Like many local independents, Tom Palazzolo has often focused on Chicago's sometimes volatile, always boisterous political scene. Photo (left) is from *Marquette Park*, Palazzolo and Mark Rance's documentary on the neo-Nazi marches.

A December 4, 1969, police raid on the apartment of party chair Fred Hampton gave the film its grisly ending. Mike Gray took *The Murder of Fred Hampton* (1971) to Hollywood in search of a distributor. Afterwards, he distilled the studio response down to: "Who is this guy Hampton? What's he played in? And why did you shoot it in black and white?"

He felt he'd bumped into "the soft underbelly of Western civilization." Gray said, "You can say anything as long as you sell tickets, so I decided to learn the other side of the coin." He left Chicago in 1972 and wrote the politically themed features *The China Syndrome* (1979) and *Wavelength* (1983).

Gordon Quinn, a cameraman for Shea and Gray, has remained on Chicago's documentary scene. His first film was *The College* (1963), an acerbic take on the hermetic "life-of-the-mind" at the University of Chicago. Quoting the philosophers John Dewey and Merleau-Ponty, Quinn's 1965 undergraduate thesis, "Cinéma Vérité in a Democracy," advocated "cinematic social inquiry."

After briefly working in New York on the music docs *Don't Look Back*, *Eat the Document*, and *Festival*, Quinn returned to Chicago. In 1967 Quinn, now age 50, helped found Kartemquin Films [see profile, pg. 31]. In a report delivered to anthropologists and sociologists, Quinn described Kartemquin as "social artists" and again quoted Dewey, stating, "Artists have always been the real purveyors of news."

The Kartemquin film *What the Fuck Are These Red Squares?* (1970) records students at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago anguishing over their role as artists in the aftermath of the Cambodian invasion and the Kent State shootings. *Golub* (1988) documents this former Chicagoan at work painting *White Squad X*, along with an international tour of his provocative political canvases.

Last year Kartemquin sought ITVS funding for *Grassroots Journal*, pitched as a "democracy channel" and "news-you-can-use series" for community activists. Quinn's sixties rhetoric still rings true, and proved prophetic. Back then, in his 116 page thesis, he urged that cinéma vérité could aid the "re-establishment of human contact between people," yet concluding that "the future of cinéma vérité is severely handicapped because it has no mass outlet." The *Grassroots Journal* proposal was turned down.

Like Quinn, Chuck Olin worked with Shea and Gray and later started his own film production company. After the Democratic National Convention Olin assisted director Nicholas Ray on a film about the Chicago Eight/Seven conspiracy trial. Ray left with all the footage a few months later, and Olin never heard from him again.

Olin's first solo project, *The Gift* (1974), was a documentary commissioned by the First National Bank about a mosaic sculpture by Marc Chagall. Although Olin, now 56, mainly produces sponsored films, some projects resonate with the political sensitivities forged in his tear-gas baptism of '68, like his Martin Luther King portrait.

Cultural survival and human rights are other Olin interests. *Box of Treasure* (1983) followed the Nimpkish people's struggle to build their own museum of Kwakiutl culture in Alert Bay, British Columbia. *Out of the Silence: Fighting for Human Rights* (1991) compares democratic struggles in Czechoslovakia and Guatemala. Olin says this cassette has reached activist audiences in 50 countries.

Bob Hercules, the 35-year-old president of Media Process Group, represents a younger generation of progressive producers. "I came to Chicago for the political scene," says Hercules. "It's a city that's endlessly fascinating to me because of all the political machinations. It's a city that takes politics seriously, and so do I.

"When I moved here in 1984, I read this article in the *Chicago Tribune* about this group called Kartemquin. I couldn't pronounce their name," Hercules remembers. He started a group for investigating the "process of media." One of their projects, *The Imagemaker* (1987), responded to a bitter strike at the *Chicago Tribune*. It portrays a faceless P.R. mercenary deployed by management to disinform the public about a newspaper's anti-union tactics.

Media Process Group incorporated after starting as a cooperative. Hercules helped start *Labor Beat*, a public access show for grassroots labor activists, and later served on the board of Deep Dish TV Network. Hercules' *Did They Buy It?* (1990) followed the U.S. media in Managua covering Nicaragua's 1990 election. He is now working on a documentary on the environmental disaster in Times Beach, Missouri.

Hercules produced one of *The 90's* election specials for PBS on the 1992 presidential campaign. Management at Chicago's WTTW, however, insisted on deleting a few pointed exchanges between the program's gonzo reporter, Stony Burke, and convention-goers [see "Independents Lose Out on Election Coverage," Jan./Feb. 1993].

Early organizing efforts by the Chicago Area Videomakers Coalition lead to the Chicago Editing Center, a video equipment cooperative that turned into the Center for New Television in 1978. That same year Channel 11 set aside a weekly half-hour slot for independent work called *Image Union*, which is still on the air. The show's first producer was Tom Weinberg [see profile, pg. 30]. An institutional improviser, Weinberg, now 48, has been WTTW's in-house independent, producing documentary specials on Chicago pols like the late Adlerman Vito Marzullo, former Mayor Richard J. Daley, and current Chicago Congressman Dan Rostenkowski.







Three Chicago landmarks: Maxwell Street, from Tom Palazzolo's film of the same name; Wrigley Field, one of the four oldest ballfields documented by Bob Hercules (right) in *Baseball Heirlooms*; and former Chicagoan and Second City alum Bill Murray, here providing narration for Loretta Smith's (left) documentary *H.O.M.E.: There's No Place Like It.*

A longtime collaborator with Weinberg, from the Chicago Editing Center through *The 90's*, is Scott Jacobs, a former *Chicago Sun-Times* reporter who picked up a portapak to try New Journalism through video. Jacobs started Independent Programming Associates in 1982, where independent documentaries are edited in between corporate jobs.

After shooting campaign ads on shoestring budgets for maverick mayoral candidate Jane Byrne, Jacobs obtained behind-the-scenes access to her hotel suite as the votes were tallied in her upset victory. The video team of Lilly Olinger and Cynthia Neal recorded *Jane Byrne: An Election Night Portrait* (1979).

Tom Palazzolo, 53, has served as Chicago's unofficial "Mayor of Documentary" for two decades. An unincorporated one-man institution, Palazzolo has put on a veritable parade of surreal vérité films on Chicago characters and ceremonies. He likes to sign his work as Tommy "Chicago" Palazzolo. Teaching at the School of the Art Institute since 1976, he has inspired many local filmmakers through his free-form collaborations with performance artists and filmmaking classes.

A gossip columnist called one of Palazzolo's early experimental films "a dainty little undergrounder" when the Chicago Police Censor Board shut down a church basement screening and took the print to the station. Although he's less inclined to spell out an ideological line like Kartemquin's, Palazzolo is drawn to compelling political subject matter. Starting with experimental essays *America's in Real Trouble* (1966), *Campaign* (1968), and *Love It Leave It* (1971), he later documented neo-Nazi marches in *Marquette Park I & II* (1977 & 1978), with Mark Rance. *The Bride Stripped Bare* (1967) mocked Mayor Daley's pompous dedication of a Picasso sculpture.

"Chicago is a good place to do politics," Palazzolo feels. "It's not as theatrical as New York, but there's more under the surface. It's more subtle. I don't know what the hell's going on in California. There's no political filmmaking out there. It's too pretty."

Recalling his earlier portraits *The Pigeon Lady* (1966) and *The Story How I Become the Tatooed Lady* (1967), Palazzolo's latest film is about a woman who ran the Midget Club, later shut down by the city. Her husband appeared in *The Wizard of Oz* and she goes on stage and to St. Patrick's Day parades as a leprechaun.

Another Chicago stalwart is Loretta Smith, who settled in Chicago after traveling in Central America and Southeast Asia as a freelance photojournalist. Like many Chicago independents, Smith worked on various Kartemquin projects. While at Columbia College she made her first documentary, *Where Did You Get That Woman?* (1982), about Joan Williams, a black restroom attendant.

Smith, 46, continues work on *A Good American: The Times of Ron Kovic*, which she started when the Vietnam vet activist/author spoke at a Chicago rally in 1984. "I lived in L.A. for three years and I really missed the support system in Chicago," Smith said in an interview, ironically from L.A., where she was fundraising. Right after *Platoon* came out and before he made *Born on the Fourth of July*, Oliver Stone hosted a benefit for Smith's documentary on Kovic that brought in $30,000.

Meanwhile, she completed *H.O.M.E.: There's No Place Like It* for a

The good news is that about 16 features have been produced in Chicago during the past eight years. The bad news is that most have had only a limited theatrical release.

Chicago social service agency, with actor Bill Murray serving as the narrator. Smith is busy on a new film on Illinois Senator Carol Moseley-Braun. Her working title speaks for all of Sweet Home Chicago's documentary-makers: *Making History.*

Bill Stamets' documentaries have covered the erection of Claes Oldenburg's baseball bat sculpture, an anti-gay rally by neo-Nazis, Mayor Harold Washington's campaigns and funeral, and the last two presidential campaigns. He writes for the Chicago Sun-Times, *the Chicago* Reader, New Art Examiner, *and* In These Times.

The Big Picture

Independent feature film production in the Windy City

ALYCE BARRY

"All we need is one hit—a commercial success from a person who's committed to staying in Chicago, the way Gus Van Sant is committed to Portland," says Jim Vincent, president of Independent Feature Project/Midwest and producer of the black comedy *Meet the Parents.*

Some believe Chicago is on the brink of such a breakthrough. Consider the fact that Tom Rosenberg, executive producer of *The Commitments*, lives in Chicago (though few people know it; he studiously keeps a low profile). Or that Darryl Roberts' third feature, to be shot here later this year with a budget of $3 million to $5 million, will be released by Universal. Or that John McNaughton, whose *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer* brought him into the public eye, plans to continue working as an independent in the Windy City. Following McNaughton's latest directorial effort, Universal's *Mad Dog and Glory*, starring Robert De Niro, Bill Murray, and Uma Thurman, McNaughton and his partner, Steve Jones, hope to have a new independent film in production in the fall. McNaughton's stylish direction and Jones' hip use of music are certainly capable of producing a mainstream hit—if they lighten up a little. (*Chicago Tribune* film critic Dave Kehr has called McNaughton "the most spectacularly pessimistic American filmmaker to come along since the heyday of the film noir masters.")

Chicago certainly offers fertile ground for local producers. With its renowned regional theaters and comedy clubs, the city has plenty of above-the-line talent. A busy location film and advertising scene has also created a pool of skilled production crew workers. And Chicago is home to the likes of director John Hughes (*Home Alone*, *Sixteen Candles*), whose profit mill cranks out immensely popular comedies from a tennis-club-turned-production facility on Chicago's far north side. (Hughes, however, has shown no inclination whatever to encourage, much less participate in, the area's independent filmmaking community.)

Chicago's other media multimillionaire is Oprah Winfrey. The talk-show host began producing made-for-TV movies and after-school specials for ABC last year out of her $20 million production facility, Harpo Studios, on Chicago's West Side. She is reportedly interested in developing features at some time in the future. With a reputed net worth of $250 million, Oprah Winfrey clearly can do anything she chooses.

In terms of lower-budget independent features, the good news, as they say, is that about 16 films have been produced in Chicago during the past eight years by local makers. The bad news is that most have had only a limited theatrical release, and only nine have been released on video or will be in the near future.

As I write, three films are still playing in theaters. Darryl Roberts' ensemble comedy *How U Like Me Now?* was initially released last September and rereleased in February when Roberts signed a distribution deal with Shapiro Glickenhaus Entertainment in LA. Expected out on video in August, the film is one of very few by black male directors with a nonsexist view of women. Greg Glienna and Jim Vincent's *Meet the Parents* is being self-distributed, city by city, to theaters around the country and continues to attract the midnight screening crowd. (The film's video rights were initially purchased by National Lampoon Home Video and then never exploited.) *Green on Thursdays* is a documentary on violence against gays and lesbians



John McNaughton, director of *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer* (pictured), hails from Chicago and plans to start production on another independent feature there this fall.

Courtesy MPI Home Video

Chicago Takes the Lead in Alternative Music Videos

Chicago, with its rich musical heritage, has served as a home for jazz and blues over the years. During the last decade or so, it has also witnessed the birth of house and industrial dance music. Given its history, it's not surprising that the city has had a strong impact on music video. Within the bustling music video community in the Windy City, two of the prime players are Atavistic and H-Gun.

"Atavistic was founded in 1986 as a music video label," says Kurt Kellison, who runs Atavistic with partner Paula Froehle. The production company began by documenting the live performances of many of America's finest alternative rock bands at a time when such an undertaking was practically unheard of (with the exception of San Francisco's now defunct Target Video). They soon began producing label-based compilations: handsomely packaged and commercially available "long-form" videos that compile an assortment of clips of different bands all signed to a single label, such as Seattle's highly touted Sub Pop. Other Atavistic videos bring together extremely disparate clips, oblivious of label affiliations, such as the *Twelve O'Clock High* series.

"We're trying to present imagist work that is musically driven in a context that is different from anywhere else," Kellison explains. Viewers may see "a *120 Minutes*–type Mudhoney video by Steve Brown, along with a piece by Mark Nugent and Leah Singer made for Elliott Sharp's [experimental music group] Carbon, which is totally experimental film—optically printed and locked to a music track." Kellison continues, "Then there's intense super 8 animation by Chris Knox of New Zealand."

In addition to directing and producing their own music videos, Atavistic produces PSAs, animation, optical packaging, and issues audio recordings. The company also plans several volumes of independent film work "which will be more musically driven, as opposed to narrative or documentary," says Kellison. "What I think makes Atavistic unique," he notes, "is that we built a business around things that didn't require incredible sums of money to make happen."

H-Gun is a partnership between between Eric Koziol, Benjamin Stokes, Eric Zimmerman—who met and began to collaborate while attending the School of the Art Institute of Chicago—and Jim Deloye. Koziol says, "The name H-Gun is actually a scrambling of a former identity. There was a musical group, Ungh, named after a James Brown expression." It was while creating Ungh's on-stage media environment, combining music with video images, that their work caught the attention of Chicago industrial rock maven Al Jourgensen. He enlisted Koziol, Stokes, and Zimmerman to make three videos for his bands Ministry and the Revolting Cocks.

Koziol recalls, "It was a really good meeting of minds and talent, and it sort of defined the Chicago aesthetic at a certain point— in look and capturing the landscape, and the way the technology had influenced sound." The group's highly influential rapid-cut editing, which H-Gun members coined toggle editing, "is very much like editing to the beat, says Koziol. "Because the people here are musicians, it seemed like a good marriage for image making."

The Ministry videos caught the attention of the music industry, and it was at this point that Deloye came aboard as producer and H-Gun was officially formed. H-Gun has subsequently moved from the underground into the limelight. They've made some 70 to 80 music videos in less than five years and now have an endless flow of well-financed clients, including many of today's most important musical acts, including Public Enemy, Screaming Trees, Soundgarden, and Skid Row.

Like Atavistic, H-Gun is diversifying its interests, which now include computer animation, audio media, and most ambitiously, a television series in the works. Koziol explains, "Our work in music videos has always sort of been the vision, but it's just one pathway."

PETER MARGASAK

Peter Margasak has written about music for Spin, *the* Chicago Tribune, *and publishes the music magazine* Butt Rag.



Atavistic Video's music video for Chicago's Eleventh Dream Day shows vocalist/drummer Janet Bean belting it out against a massive 35mm Cinemascope projection of the band.



Darnell Williams and Salli Richardson rehearse a scene for Darryl Roberts' comedy on male/female relations, *How U Like Me Now.*

Photo: [illegible]

in Chicago made by Dean Bushala and Deirdre Heaslip, who have placed it in theaters in Detroit, Minneapolis, and New York.

If Chicago has not yet produced any breakaway hits, it's for reasons that aren't unique to this city. In the case of some films, the script was clearly at fault. *Heaven Is a Playground*, Randy Fried's adaptation of Rick Telander's book, starring D.B. Sweeney, Michael Warren, and basketball star Bo Kimball (released in 1991), was originally conceived as a vehicle for Chicago Bulls star Michael Jordan and went through so many script changes that the story lost its focus and consistency. *Shaking the Tree* (released 1992), Duane Clark's story of four male friends, was about selfish twentysomethings talking in cliches ("Boy, women! I don't think I'll ever understand them"). And Darryl Roberts' 1988 feature, *The Perfect Model* (released on video as *Sweet Perfection*), was an unlikely romance with an equally unlikely subplot.

In others cases, the films appealed to limited, niche audiences. Michael Dawson produced the renovation of Orson Welles's film *Othello*, of interest primarily to Welles fans and film historians. (Insoluble technical problems probably also had something to do with its lack of success.) Tom Palazzolo's quirky, extremely low-budget films (*Added Lessons*, *Caligari's Cure*, etc.) have a loyal, but limited, following. Even *Henry: Portrait of a Serial Killer*, the best independent film produced here to date (made in 1986, released theatrically after several years of legal hassles and on video in 1990), had a limited audience, reaching only those willing to see a film rated X for its graphic violence.

Films released theatrically but not yet on video seem to fall into either the art film or soap-box category. In the arthouse niche are *All the Love in the World*, made by Dan Curran and Jennifer Howe (photographed by Janusz Kaminski, currently shooting *Schindler's List* in Poland for Steven Spielberg) and animator and experimental filmmaker J.P. Somersaulter's experimental film *Donna Rosebud*. Jawanza Kunjufu's *Up Against the Wall* and Ruby Oliver's *Love Your Mama* were too preachy to gain a broad following.

On the festival circuit, documentary filmmaker Taggart Siegel's first narrative feature, *Wild Blue Moon*, premiered at the Chicago International Film Festival last fall and is now seeking wider distribution. Other films looking for distribution include Chuck Lippitz's *My Favorite Sweetheart*, shot in Montana last year; *Rosa Mystica*, a documentary by Steve Roszell (no longer in Chicago); and Tom Vollman's super 8 horror film *Dead Meat*.

Nearly a dozen other feature projects are in postproduction. Rose Troche is getting completion funding from John Pierson's Islet, Inc., for her lesbian love story, *Go Fish*, expected to be ready for the fall's film festivals. Loretta Smith is still in need of funding to finish her anti-war documentary on Ron Kovic (author of *Born on the Fourth of July*). Other documentaries in postproduction include Peter Thompson's massive Hi8 project *View from a Maya Altar*. Taped in Yucatan, the work is intended as a two-part presentation totaling three hours. Kartemquin Films has worked for seven years on *Hoop Dreams*, about inner-city kids, and has just received major funding for postproduction from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Jacky Comforty's documentary on Bulgarians who sheltered Jews during the Holocaust, *The Optimists*, is slow going due to the translation involved. Reed Paget's *The Demise of Paradise* falls somewhere between documentary and drama and features footage from Tienanmen Square, the fall of the Berlin Wall, and other recent events.

Comedies in post include stand-up comic Ted Lyde's *Back to Front* and Dan Kobayashi's *The Reluctant Kamikaze*, shot with members of an Asian American theatrical troupe. J.P. Somersaulter is editing *Ten Million Dollars and No Sense*, a live-action feature shot for $150,000 last summer. *Little Cupcakes, Big Cheese* is a comedy for teens produced with Illinois money by Chicago native Michelle Deal, now a cameraperson in LA.

Still in production are Tony Greer's $20,000 docudrama *Images of Carney*, Brella Productions' horror film *The Undying*, shot on Hi8 for video



From *Heaven Is a Playground*, by Fried, originally conceived as a vehicle for Chicago Bulls star Michael Jordan.

Photo: Paul Nakai, courtesy New Line Cinema

"One can distinctly note the work of Northwestern students," says Ines Sommers. "There is a unifying style with strong content and production values."

release, and Tom Ciesielka's documentary *Frank Yankovic, America's Polka King*.

Features in preproduction include at least five films that will shoot this summer. Anthony J. Tomaska of Magnificent Mile Productions, who co-executive produced *Shaking the Tree*, plans to shoot another feature here this summer. Darryl Roberts' next film, to be financed by SGE as part of his deal for *How U Like Me Now?*, is in the script stage and should shoot in late summer. John Covert, who made *The Blind Lead* (which sold direct to video for European distribution), will produce *Waiting for the Man* this summer with a budget of around $500,000. And Paul Wei, new to Chicago, is planning a comedy called *Crazy Kids*.

Screenwriter and blues songwriter Terry Abrahamson, whose short film *How Blue Can You Get?* has won prizes on the festival circuit, is planning to start shooting a $1.8-million commercial comedy, *Get Naked*, late this summer. The team involved includes Phillip Koch (producer of the Emmy-winning *Medusa Challenger*) and film editor Elena Maganini, who edited most of McNaughton's films.

Projects in the fundraising stage include *St. Tony's*, which started life as a comedy trailer and is now winding its way through the legal system following the death of its executive producer in December. Don James' *Images of Passion* could start filming as early as June. *Thieves & Liars* is Northwestern University graduate Gene Anderson's dramatic project, also produced by Phillip Koch. Roger Barski, who produced *Chains* in 1988, is at work on other projects, and Curran and Howe are developing *Irma's Bedroom*. McDougal Films, which makes successful hour-long 16mm films for the Christian market, is developing a 35mm project for theatrical release. There are several dozen other feature projects I could name, but which will find sufficient financing is anyone's guess.

What will it take? Perhaps just one hit, as Vincent suggests. I have been told by experienced producers that money for backing independent films is here but very conservative. It may take a breakaway hit to convince the potential backers that as risky as it is, investing in a Windy City indie is worth the gamble.

Alyce Barry publishes the Chicago Filmletter, *a trade paper on feature filmmaking in the Chicago area.*

Schools of Thought

The ABCs of local film/video schools

YVONNE WELBON

Some myth makers based on the West and East coasts may not want you to read this article—especially if you are interested in teaching or studying film and/or video production, history, criticism, and theory. They are probably afraid you'll end up believing that within the heart of America's Midwest there exist alternatives to California and New York film and video programs—Chicago institutions that are expanding notions of media.

Columbia College in Chicago, with 900 undergraduates and 130 graduate students, is by far the city's largest film and video program. According to Chap Freeman, co-chair of the film and video department, the school has always been identified as a place to gain professional training for the industry. But, Freeman stresses, "we also teach history and criticism."

Columbia College is a feeder school for the local film and video industry. The school's career development office has a full-time staff person specifically to arrange student internships, develop career programs, and place Columbia College film and video grads in jobs. Internships range from working with Women in the Director's Chair to Fox 32 and Harpo Studios. The career development office aggressively promotes its students. So does the school. Columbia literature highlights regional Student Academy and Emmy award winners.

"A lot of our students work in the industry in Chicago," says co-chair Doreen Bartoni. "They are also in Hollywood and are charting new territory in the independent world."

Columbia is working to increase minority enrollment and faculty, says Freeman. "We are also in the process of enhancing our video center and have hired video artist Raul Ferrera-Balanquet. To our screenwriting program, we have brought in Alice Stephens, who has a doctorate in psychology and focuses her writing on mythology in African American forms." In addition, Columbia, known for its strong emphasis on technical training, has retained Robert Buchar of the Film Academy of Fine Arts, Prague, Czechoslovakia, to develop its cinematography program.

Two innovative programs that focus on community media are in various stages of development at Loyola University in Chicago and the School of the Art Institute of Chicago.

The roots of Loyola University's Service Learning/Social Justice Program are linked to the Catholic institution's Jesuit mission. Acknowledging its location in the diverse multicultural, multi-ethnic communities of Uptown, Devon, and Rodgers Park, Loyola's film and video faculty is working to integrate film classes with community involvement.

Loyola students are required to take courses that provide a theoretical grounding in community media along with production courses. According to Jeffery Harder, associate professor of communications, the school is shifting its focus from vocational training to service learning. Students are encouraged to work within communities with nonprofits. "In developing course work, we are looking at the relationship of mass communications to multiculturalism, to race, class, and ethnicity," says Harder. "We still provide good technical training, but with a change in focus from working within hierarchal structures." As for the current phase of development, Harder says, "A lot of the non-production oriented course work is already being added to the curriculum, but we are still negotiating the use of the



The School of the Art Institute's film and video departments will be located in the school's new building (center) on South Michigan, in the heart of the downtown Loop.

Courtesy School of the Art Institute

facilities and the hiring of personnel."

At the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, "We are really interested in supporting and developing extended notions of alternative media, alternative to the industry," says Christopher Bratton, assistant professor and acting chair of the video department. "The crux of our program is to persuade students to formulate a place for themselves within alternative media." With a commitment to theoretical and critical concerns, the department has developed classes to support these goals.

"This year we offered a two-semester course in which the first semester was devoted to theorizing and looking at the history of alternative media and the role of the intellectual in social change. The second semester was spent working in collaboration with various organizations in the city producing tapes," explains Bratton. In preparing for what Bratton terms the "reemergence of the activist engaged community," the school has hired community activists and independent producers Maria Benfield, Vera Davis, Raul Ferrera-Balanquet, Gabriel Gomez, Nell Lundy, Cyndi Moran, and Allan Siegel as instructors. "We are really interested in an active dialogue between theory and practice," says Bratton.

The Art Institute's video department now has a dozen graduate students and averages 150 to 175 students from other disciplines. Well-known Art Institute video alums include independent film- and videomaker Tom Kalin, named in the *New York Times* list of "Who's Who Among the Hot New Filmmakers," for his debut feature *Swoon*, and videomaker Janice Tanaka. The school also houses the Video Data Bank, the largest distributor of tapes by and about artists in the U.S.

In the last two years Northwestern University's film department has undergone a revolution in production, says Michelle Citron, associate professor and chairperson of the Department of Radio, Television, and Film. Northwestern currently has 300 undergraduates enrolled in courses. There are also 12 Ph.D. candidates, eight M.F.A. students, and 20 M.A. candidates studying in the department. "The orientation of our department's work is independent," says Citron. "We don't see our goal as training students to go into the traditional Hollywood system, although we do have grads in Hollywood and about half of our students do work in the industry. The other half stay very independent." She adds that the hiring of new faculty and the opening of the Lewis studio building have radically changed what the university teaches and how it is taught.

New faculty hires at Northwestern include narrative/documentary filmmaker Zeinabu irene Davis, video-essayist-turned-narrative-filmmaker Laura Kipnis, and television/screenwriter Delle Chatman. Citron says the new faculty has given the department a depth and breadth that was not there before.

Northwestern's John J. Lewis Hall is a $6-million facility, built in what 1991, that includes a state-of-the-art television studio, soundstage, five off-line editing suites, three on-line suites, and computer graphics. "One can distinctly note the work of Northwestern students," says Ines Sommers, who oversees the Annual Chicago Student Film and Video Festival as program director at Chicago Filmmakers. "There is a unifying style with strong content and production values. They have such good equipment. The top narrative awards for this and last year's festival went to Northwestern students."

This summer, the School of the Art Institute's film and video departments will also move to a new building. Michelle Fleming, associate professor and acting chair of the filmmaking department, states, "For the first time we will have facilities that are appropriate for what we do."

Serving approximately 250 undergraduate and grad students from other departments and 25 to 30 film graduate students, the film department allows students to create their own curriculum based on their interests.

The new space includes a shooting studio, a sound studio, a black-and-white film processing lab, optical printer rooms, and an exhibition space. "Some other schools recommend that film be done a certain way, that there is a right way and a wrong way. What we are trying to do is get students to find out what their way of making films is," says Fleming. "With our expansion we will be outfitted to do anything students want to do."

Many Art Institute film department grads work in the industry, start their own production companies, or teach. Award-winning experimental narrative filmmaker and recent grad Paula Froehle makes a living directing and shooting music videos. "It's a good way to support myself," says Froehle. "I gain access to equipment that I wouldn't ordinarily have access to. It allows me to investigate and explore cinemagraphic techniques that can be reflected back into my independent work."

Ines Sommers of Chicago Filmmakers will tell you that University of Illinois film and video students can't be typecast. "We never know what to expect." Wayne Boyer, associate professor in the School of Art and Design at the University of Illinois Chicago Circle (UICC), adds that "everything is based on an individual artist's approach. We do not emphasize hierarchal or crew type approaches to production." Within the school students have access to film, video, animation, interactive video, electronic media programs, and computer graphics. What students create is quite diverse.



Northwestern's campus is in suburban community of Evanston, a short El ride north of Chicago.

According to Boyer, graduates of the program usually find work in industrial/commercial production, working with effects animation for Disney, or creating their own production companies. Some finishing houses have come to rely on UICC grads in computer visualization, Boyer says.

For the film and video department within the School of Art and Design at the University of Illinois Chicago Circle, change has come through integration. "We recently merged with the School of Performing Arts," says Boyer. "There is an interest in interdisciplinary arts now. The faculty realizes the potential of those possibilities." In addition, the school plans new faculty hires and expansion in video.

Other Chicago universities that offer courses in film and video production include Depaul University and Chicago State University, an institution that is 85 percent African American. According to Peter Shapiro, Chicago State media specialist, the university graduates more minority students in video production than any other school in the area. Currently there are approximately 100 majors in the department.

Although there is no formal academic program or concentration in film, cinema, or media studies at the University of Chicago, an interdisciplinary concentration in cinema studies is offered. Miriam Hansen, professor of English Language and Literature and director of the Film Studies Center, was recently awarded a Mellon Foundation grant to enhance the university's program in cinema studies. Hansen intends to develop curricular structures that will enable students to undertake cinema studies at both the undergraduate and graduate levels.

According to Mary Carbine, film librarian at the University of Chicago, "the Film Studies Center provides essential resources for the study and teaching of film and related media. With its strong interdisciplinary and historical approaches, the university provides an intellectual framework for cinema studies."

Yvonne Welbon, a filmmaker and writer, resides in Chicago.

Chicago Film/Video Schools

Chicago State University, Dept. of English & Speech, 9501 S. King Dr., Chicago, IL 60628-1598; (312) 995-2000. Undergraduate degree in broadcasting includes classes in video prod., also offered to non-degree students.

Columbia College, 600 S. Michigan, Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 663-1600, ext. 300. Offers courses in screenwriting, directing, doc, animation, lighting, sound, editing & cinematography; degree program for undergraduates & graduates.

DePaul University, 2323 N. Seminary, Chicago, IL 60614; (312) 362-6881. Undergrad degree in communications w/ classes in video production, film history, media criticism.

Discovery Center, 2940 N. Lincoln Ave., Chicago, IL 60657; (312) 348-8120. Low-cost, short-term courses for breaking into TV commercials, acting, beginning cartoon drawing & prod. & improvisation.

Film Center at the School of the Art Institute, Columbus Drive at Jackson, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 443-3733. 15-class introductory courses offered w/ weekly screenings.

Loyola University, 6525 N. Sheridan, Cudahy Science Bldg, Rm 406, Chicago, IL; (312) 508-3730. Undergrad degree in communications w/ a concentration in radio/TV/film. Classes incl. production, history & film genre.

Northwestern University, University College, Wieboldt Hall 612, 339 E. Chicago Ave., Chicago, IL 60611-3008; (312) 503-6950 & Anderson Hall 1-117, 2003 Sheridan Rd, Evanston, IL 60208-2660; (708) 491-5611. Radio/TV/Film Dept. offers Production Aesthetics, Advanced Screenwriting, Cable Communication & courses in film history & criticism w/ open enrollment policy.

Francis W. Parker School, 330 W. Webster, Chicago, IL 60614; (312) 549-5904/549-5905. Mini-courses in video prod. & scriptwriting, among other offerings.

Roosevelt University, AV/TV/Media, 430 S. Michigan, Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 341-3500. Offers classes in video; also has broadcast communications degree program.

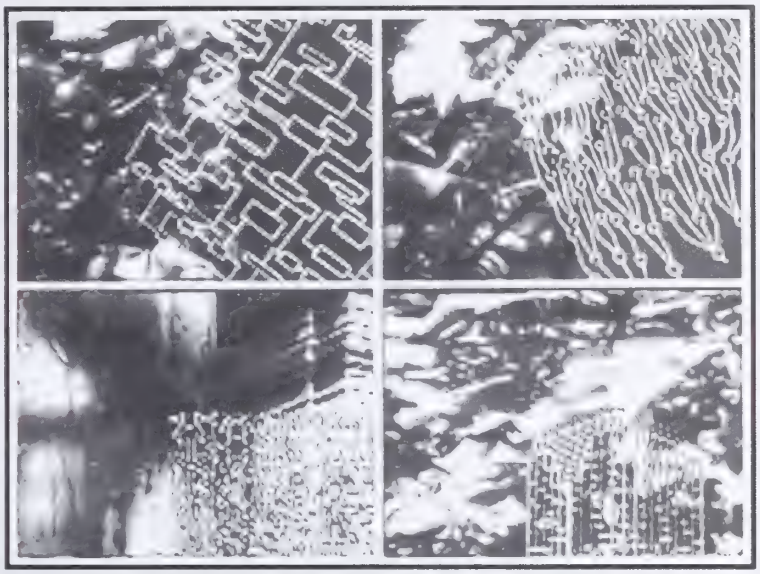
Screenwriting Seminars, cosponsored by Northwestern Univ. & G/R Advertising; (312) 642-8851. Spring & fall workshops, consisting of 2-day seminars taught by people from Hollywood, incl. agents, writers, producers & executives.

University of Illinois, Chicago Campus, School of Art & Design, M/C 036, 929 W. Harrison, Rm 106, Chicago, IL 60607-7038; (312) 996-3337. Offers undergraduate degree in film/video/electronic media & graduate degree in film/animation & video.

Susan Telingator © 1993

Those familiar with the development of video art in the seventies will recognize the names of Daniel Sandin, Robert Snyder, and John Manning. The technical inventions and aesthetic concepts of these three Chicago artists and teachers not only helped shaped a Chicago style of video, but affected videomakers all across the country. Less commonly known is how these three have continued to explore today's cutting edge technologies, from virtual reality to artificial intelligence.

As artists, Sandin, Snyder, and Manning have variously investigated the potentials of new technological instruments, engineering hardware and software to accomplish their aesthetic aims. They have also designed innovative educational environments at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago (SAIC) and the University of Illinois-Chicago (UIC), where they share their expertise with others.



From Bob Snyder's *Hard and Flexible Music*

Although Sandin has a master's degree in physics, he abandoned the realm of pure science after discovering video during teach-ins at the University of Illinois-Chicago while protesting the U.S. invasion of Cambodia. In 1970 he decided to build a visual equivalent of the Moog audio synthesizer. The Image Processor he finished three years later was a modular, patch programmable video synthesizer that could manipulate camera signals and produce many special effects that were unobtainable with commercial switchers. Because he made the plans for his device available for free, 25 other Image Processors were built, mainly by artists in the Chicago area. The result was a body of work with a unique style—synthesized video featuring incremental transformations of representational imagery—that transformed video art during the seventies.

The masterpiece of this genre was undoubtedly *AlienNATION*, a videotape John Manning produced in collaboration with Edward Rankus and Barbara Latham in 1980. The institutional sterility and repression of emotional spontaneity in *AlienNATION*'s dystopian world are lampooned in an unrelenting bombardment of jarring images and disquieting sounds. A postmodern plethora of junk food, prefabricated condominiums, devastated landscapes, and soporific entertainment are debunked with an intellectual rigor reminiscent of John Heartfield's antifascist photomontages.

Manning was introduced to the Image Processor as an M.F.A. student at SAIC. When the analog circuitry of this instrument was rendered obsolete by the emergence of digital systems in the eighties, he began to make interactive computer installations. But rather than fetishize computer technology, Manning delivers an ironic mockery of the conceptual paradigms underlying artificial intelligence. In *Computer Graphics 101* (1990), Manning deliberately utilized a primitive computer (the superannuated Apple II) and simplistic programming language to autonomously generate basic shapes and choose colors that compete for display on a wall of nine monitors. *Computer Graphics 101* wittily reduces the potentials of computer technology to their lowest common denominator.

In the mission statement for the Art and Technology Department at SAIC, Manning identified one goal of the program as "encourag[ing] students to evaluate critically the imprints left by electronic media tools on the images made with them." Robert Synder, a musical composer who has been making videotapes since he took a class from Sandin in 1974, has a similar philosophy.

Hard and Flexible Music (1988), contained on a videodisc Snyder issued of his complete works from 1975 to 1990, serves as a reprise of the ideas he has explored throughout his career. It is structured as a diptych, with opposing tendencies in sound and image portrayed on the two sides of the screen and stereo soundtrack. On the right, hard metallic sounds generated through digital techniques are illustrated with rigid visual patterns. On the left are analog quasi-vocal sounds and images from nature. This segregation soon mutates, with the right side becoming infected with the qualities of its opposite.

Sandin is now working with a group called $(Art)^n$ on a prototype for a 3D postcard and on research on virtual reality. The 3D postcards, dubbed Phscolograms, fuse computer, photographic, sculptural, and holograhic techniques. Mounted on light boxes, color images change as the viewer examines them from different angles.

CAVE, a virtual reality environment Sandin has constructed that alludes to Plato's allegory of simulation, premiered at the SIGGRAPH conference in Chicago in 1992. A digital storm of images from four computers are synchronized when a person wearing stereo glasses steps into the space—a 10-by-10-foot cubicle with projection screens covering three walls and the floor. A sensor on the glasses tracks the wearer's movement and feeds this data back into the computer. The imagery ranges from brain maps to an illustration of the Big Bang theory.

For more than 20 years Sandin, Manning, and Snyder have served as mediators between scientists, engineers, artists, and the public. Their work as artists and teachers has enriched the media arts community in Chicago and served as a model for computer-based aesthetic experimentation elsewhere.

CHRISTINE TAMBLYN

Christine Tamblyn is an artist/critic who teaches at San Francisco State University's Inter-Arts Center.

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Chicago Resources

Professional Associations

ASIFA Central (Assoc. Int'l du Film d'Animation), Midwest chapter, Animation Plus! Gallery, 790 Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 243-8666. Offers screenings, seminars & workshops in animation. Members incl. animators, producers & educators in animation industry.

Association of Independent Commercial Producers, Chicago/Midwest Chapter, 111 E. Chestnut, Ste. 42B, Chicago, IL 60611; (312) 440-1430. Assoc. for prod companies & suppliers who work w/ commercial film business.

Black Screenwriters Association, Box 3558, Chicago, IL 60654-0558; (312) 509-8521. One of two organizations in country dedicated solely to advancement of black screen & TV writers.

Chicago Association of Black Filmmakers, 3130 N. Lakeshore Dr., Box 810, Chicago, IL 60657; (312) 935-5993. Hopes to increase visibility & encourage employment of Chicago's African American craftspersons.

Chicago Film Critics Association, 1152 N. LaSalle St., Bldg B, Chicago, IL 60610; (312) 664-7554. Nonprofit org. runs annual Chicago Film Critics Awards, issues viewpoints on film-related issues, sponsors charitable efforts & provides roundtable discussions w/ critics & audiences.

Chicago Screenwriters Connection, (312) 935-2977. Founded as a means to network, support & encourage advanced screenwriters. Members avail. for professional script revisions & rewrites.

Independent Feature Project/Midwest, 116 W. Illinois St., Chicago, IL 60612; (312) 467-4437. Regional chapter of nat'l organization that promotes growth of feature filmmaking.

International Teleproduction Society, Chicago Region Chapter, c/o Northwest Teleproductions, 142 E. Ontario St., Ste 400, Chicago, IL 60611; (312) 337-6000. Addresses the business, technical & creative aspects of teleproduction industry.

Out & Out Media; contact Jennifer Allen: (312) 987-9054, or H.D. Motyl: (312) 465-5305. Coalition of lesbian & gay mediamakers that encourages gay activism in the media.

Women in Cable, 500 N. Michigan Ave., Ste 1400, Chicago, IL 60611; (312) 661-1700. Geared to empower women in cable industry to attain economic, professional & personal goals & to influence future of the industry.

Women in Film, 30 N. Michigan Ave., Ste 508, Chicago, IL 60602, (312) 372-2376. Created to promote, advocate & further opportunities for women in film, TV & video industries.

Organizations

Center for New Television, 1440 N. Dayton St., Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 951-6868. Serves as a resource for video artists & community media producers in need of equipment, supervision, support & technical assistance. Workshops cover video prod., editing & business of videomaking.

Chicago Filmmakers, 1229 W. Belmont, Chicago, IL 60657; (312) 281-8788. Screens ind. features, int'l, nat'l & local works as well as experimental films/videos. Houses a prod. facility & offers classes. Screenwriting, animation, film prod. & sound recording among wide range of classes.

Chicago Video Project, 1229 N. North Branch, Ste 301, Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 335-9565. Creates affordable, effective video that dramatically strengthens the capacity of grassroots community organizattions to solve critical urban problems.

Community Film Workshop, 1130 S. Wabash Ave., Ste 400, Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 427-1245. Media arts center geared towards people of color, providing training, access & prod for students of film & video.

Community TV Network, 2035 W. Wabansia, 1st fl, Chicago, IL 60647; (312) 278-8500. Neighborhood classes teach inner-city youth all aspects of video prod. Also offers advanced training for graduates from neighborhood classes & handles nonprofit & small business video projects.

Experimental Film Coalition, Box 1535, Chicago, IL 60690-1535; (312) 986-1823. Dedicated to prod., understanding & dissemination of experimental film. Holds monthly screenings at Randolph St. Gallery.

Facets Multimedia & Facets Video Theater, 1517 W. Fullerton, Chicago, IL 60614; w/ branches at Columbia College & in Glencoe, IL; (312) 281-9075. Nonprofit theater showcases ind. & foreign films & videos. Home video rental operation focuses on similar work.

Film Center at the School of the Art Institute, Columbus Dr. at Jackson, Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 443-3733. Exhibition program offers a large selection of ind., int'l & classic films, usually organized by theme on a rotating basis; classes taught on intro level.

Jewish Film Foundation, 6025 N. Christiana, Chicago, IL 60659; (312) 588-2763. Shows award-winning, ind. movies w/ Jewish themes at several theaters throughout Chicago area.

Psychotronic Film Society; (312) 738-0985. For last 5 years, lovers of B-movies, horror pics, fantasy, sci-fi & other trashy genres have been treated to hodgepodge of classics through society's efforts to keep all that's pyschotronic in the public eye.

Video Data Bank, School of the Art Institute of Chicago, 37 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago, IL 60603; (312) 899-5172. Largest distributor of tapes by & about contemporary artists in the country. Coordinates Video Drive-Ins & public screening events, maintains free public screening room.

Festivals

Annual Festival of Illinois Film & Video Artists, Columbia College, 600 S. Michigan, Chicago, IL 60605; (312) 663-1600 ext.300, ext.301. Two-tiered juried competition awards cash prizes & certificates films ranging from docs & narratives to animated & experimental work.

Blacklight Film Festival, Box 4523, Chicago, IL 60680; (312) 443-3733. Started by Floyd Webb, Sergio Nims & Terry White in order to challenge Hollywood image of blacks & seek worldwide recognition of alternate depictions of African Americans in film. One of two such fests in country for black filmmakers.

Chicago International Children's Film Festival, Facets Multimedia, 1517 W. Fullerton Ave., Chicago, IL 60614; (312) 281-9075. The best in films & video for children, chosen by selected adult & children's juries.

Chicago International Film Festival, (312) 644-FILM. For more than 25 yrs, fest showcases two weeks of foreign cinema, incl. world premieres. Docs, video, animation & features included, representing nearly 40 countries.

Gay and Lesbian Film Festival, Chicago Filmmakers; (312) 281-8788. Second oldest gay film fest in US (started in 1981), this 10-day film & video showcase premieres notable works by lesbian & gay directors.

Latino Film Festival, Chicago Latino Cinema, (312) 431-1330. Annual fest includes films & videos by Latino artists from Latin America, Spain, Portugal & US.

Onion City Experimental Film Festival, (312) 966-1823. Held at Randolph St. Gallery, fest offers cash prizes determined by fest attendance.

Women in the Director's Chair Film & Video Festival, (312) 281-4988. Held during Women's History Month, fest seeks to encompass emerging & established women directors of all cultures. Sponsored by Women in the Director's Chair, a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting women ind. film- & videomakers.

Susan Telingator © 1993

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Talking Heads

Tom Weinberg

P R O D U C E R

From TVTV to The 90's

"It was a rejection of TV behavior," Tom Weinberg begins. "An attempt of putting people on TV in a way that was civilized, civil, human, funny, and interesting."

Weinberg sits in the Billy Goat Tavern (made famous by John Belushi screaming "cheeseburger, cheeseburger, cheeseburger" in a *Saturday Night Live* skit) chewing on an unlit cigar. As he talks about a new way of presenting people on TV, *The Price Is Right* blares from the big screen hanging over the bar. Weinberg could be talking about *The 90's*, the PBS series for which he was executive producer and which ceased production in October 1992 after 54 shows. But he isn't: he's talking about *Slices of Chicago*, a show he produced in conjunction with the Chicago Videomakers Coalition way back in 1977 for Chicago's channel 44, then an independent UHF station.

"We asked local videomakers for their best tapes," Weinberg recalls. "They were all working with half-inch reel-to-reel Portapaks, and we asked them to tape themselves, with some kind of introduction of themselves and their work." The tapes were cut only slightly and presented within a sampler format, giving Chicagoans their first taste of alternative television.

Weinberg's career in TV and video has been anything but conventional. His first television job was producing a black news show on a local station (Don Cornelius of *Soul Train* did sports). In 1972, he was part of the group that organized videomakers from across the country—all using Portapaks, of course—to tape the 1972 Miami Republican Convention. This troupe became the umbrella collective Top Value Television (TVTV), with member groups like Raindance from New York, Videopolis from Chicago, Video Freaks from upstate New York, and Ant Farm from California. TVTV went on to produce *The World's Largest TV Studio*, *Lord of the Universe*, *TVTV Goes to the Oscars*, and other tapes.

Weinberg later went on to meld TVTV's "collage-style editing," as he calls it, with his idea of bringing work to TV that is important to audiences and his support of independent mediamakers. In 1978 he began *Image Union*, a half-hour series showcasing work by Chicago media artists, which aired on the local PBS station, WTTW, where he worked on and off as a producer for 15 years. Weinberg also created a series that began in 1974 and ran through 1975 called *It's a Living*, inspired by Studs Terkel's book *Working*, with the makers using Portapaks to capture working women and men around Chicagoland. During this time, Weinberg cofounded the Editing Center, which evolved into the still-thriving Center for New Television.



Photo: Matthew Gilson, courtesy filmmaker

In 1989, Weinberg and Joel Cohen began to produce *The 90's*. This series is the ultimate Weinberg creation: weekly excerpts of independent work revolving around a particular theme. Initially Weinberg and Cohen booked satellite transponder time to beam the program to PBS stations. Quite a few picked it up. PBS then offered direct support for *The 90's* and placement on their national feed. But after two seasons, PBS pulled its support. Their monies, Weinberg was told, had to be funnelled into primetime programming. While more than 200 stations carried *The 90's*, many did so outside of primetime. PBS funding, therefore, evaporated.

Weinberg has subsequently produced a spin-off of *The 90's* called *Watch It!* He is hoping for a commercial TV syndication deal. A commercial TV station produced the *Watch It!* pilot, which, like *The 90's*, consists of independent video shot by a lot of people around a particular theme. Unlike *The 90's*, studio hosts introduce the show's segments, leading the audience through the show. "It's much more linear than *The 90's*," Weinberg admits. He is also currently working with a Chicago commercial station on a half-hour program focusing on Chicagoland personalities and events, shot by local mediamakers. He hopes to have the show on the air this summer.

Weinberg has also received funding from the MacArthur Foundation to explore the next step in alternative television: an entire channel that would give direct responsibility to independents and affiliated groups to produce regular programming. "Context," Weinberg believes, "is at least as important as the content; part of what an audience gets out of TV, what the impact is, is where they see it, in what context."

The idea of getting together people with a shared vision, exploring the possibilities of TV, and growing with those possibilities is what continues to intrigue Weinberg. "Part

of the sense of building TV," he says as the game-show audience applauds, "is doing a lot of it. It doesn't make a huge amount of difference if you get it wrong the first time, because the next time you can get it right, and the next time you can get it better." Weinberg wants to keep getting it better into the next century.

H.D. MOTYL

H.D. Motyl is a Chicago film- and videomaker whose latest film, Token of Love, *will be screened in June in Chicago, at the New Festival in New York, and at the San Francisco Gay and Lesbian Film Festival.*

Jerry Blumenthal & Gordon Quinn

DOCUMENTARIANS

Kartemquin Films



Courtesy Kartemquin

The headquarters of Chicago's Kartemquin Films, in what was once an apartment over a storefront, is comfortably timeless. The framed posters on the walls haven't changed in at least 15 years, the stove in the kitchen still doesn't work, and the view out the windows of this Victorian brick building in the shadow of a gigantic shuttered factory is still of a neighborhood that is just getting by economically. But the ambiance of the front office doesn't begin to hint at the sweeping changes that have come to pass in the back rooms over the past four years, as Kartemquin's two principal partners, filmmakers Jerry Blumenthal and Gordon Quinn, have reconceptualized their mission and re-tooled their small production company to meet the future.

Kartemquin came into being 27 years ago for the purpose of making "films about social problems that were part of helping people solve them," says Quinn. Kartemquin's reputation and numerous international awards stemmed from works like *Home for Life* (1967), *The Chicago Maternity Center Story* (1976), *Taylor Chain* (1980), *The Last Pullman Car* (1983), and *Golub* (1989)—documentaries that told many different stories but never wavered from the producers' goal of understanding social change or their ideals of social justice.

Originally a collective of 12, Kartemquin went through a long phase pared down to only two. For a good part of the seventies and eighties, Quinn and Blumenthal regularly hired themselves out as technicians on industrial and commercial films to support their documentaries, which were once mostly self-financed. Blumenthal says, "There was a time when there was a very clear-cut and radical distinction between our own work and the work we did to survive." However, this split-career method took a heavy toll, and in time they devised a solution producing others' projects, making Kartemquin a base of operations for mediamakers who share their ideals and goals. Describing the new infrastructure they've created (with the help of associate Jim Morrissette and others) as "partnerships within partnerships," Blumenthal says, "Now a lot of our survival work is work that we do as producers." And, says Quinn, "We make a real attempt to get our projects funded with enough to actually feed ourselves, which didn't used to be case."

The largest of their present projects is *Hoop Dreams*, a film produced by Peter Gilbert, Fred Marx, and Steve James, and executive produced by Quinn. The documentary follows four young inner-city basketball players and their families through high school and the college recruitment process. The video is scheduled for completion and broadcast in 1994.

The most visible change at Kartemquin is the switch to working almost exclusively in video. The rooms that were formerly filled with film and sound editing equipment are now video editing suites, and the seldom-used six- and eight-plate Steenbecks stand idle down on the first floor. "There's been a shift from film to video. The marketplace has changed," explains Quinn. "At one time there was a whole nontheatrical market in 16mm distribution, which was a source of income. If it's still out there, we can't find it." Most Kartemquin work is now done in Hi8 or Betacam.

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Quinn continues, "We were committed to film, but we were always interested in the community aspects of video as something that empowered people." Blumenthal adds, "One of the ironies is that originally video was seen as a way of doing things that didn't take any money, and that could never produce any money. It was purely political, it was purely community service. You could, in a very immediate and totally inexpensive way, produce something that could plug into a social situation. The irony is that's become completely inverted. Now the only way you can make a living is if you have this base in video."

Some of Kartemquin's future plans focus on thinking about the nature of television and ways to make it more effective. Two projects, which have not yet been funded, are both television series. *The Family Video Show* would demonstrate how to use a camcorder as a human instrument, encouraging the individual to create family histories and other home-based projects. *Grassroots Journal* would be modeled after business shows, but aimed at nonprofit grassroots organizations with the goal of helping them see themselves as part of a viable sector of society with common interests. The programs would focus on model nonprofits, demonstrate ways in which government and business can cooperate, and explore the implications of federal policies for nonprofits.

Quinn sums up, "We've changed, but we've remained the same—that's the reason we've survived. In some ways, I'd say we're still trying to reach the same audience. In the beginning we'd run out the door with the film and a projector in hand, and we'd show it in a church basement somewhere. Now, we're thinking much larger and asking, how can we get this to a whole national audience? And actually it's harder. It was a lot simpler when you showed the film in the union hall where you made it."

BARBARA SCHARRES

Barbara Scharres is director of the Film Center at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and does freelance writing for American Cinematographer, *the Chicago* Reader, *and other publications.*

Denise Zaccardi

EMPOWERING YOUTH

Community Television Network

You could say that Denise Zaccardi is trying to get young people behind a camera, instead of in front of one.

Kids in Chicago too often show up on the local news as victims (or perpetretors) of a long litany of troubles afflicting city children: murder, rape, gang violence, teen pregnancy, drugs, high dropout rates. Most of the teenagers Zaccardi works with are, in fact, dropouts, mostly minorities, from tough neighborhoods—what she calls "the statistics kids." Her goal is a simple one: to put video in their hands, as a tool to help "turn them around."

She got the idea back in the early seventies, when she was teaching in an alternative school on the West Side. "I saw TVTV's program on the 1972 Republican convention. That was radical video, where for the first time you took cameras out of the anchor booths and put them in the hands of people on the floor, let them talk to the old ladies, so that you got a real sense of what that event was."

That gave her the inspiration to use video in education, "so that young people could tell their own stories." In those pre-Reagan days, Zaccardi was able to get federal money to begin offering video classes in 10 alternative high schools set up to give dropouts and troubled teens a second chance at an education. Thus began Community Television Network (CTVN). From the beginning, the kids' work connected right back to the communities from which they came.

One of CTVN's first projects was recording the West Town Concerned Citizens' struggle for Latino rights. "The kids went right along with them everywhere they went, documenting what was taking place," Zaccardi recalls. "And we started to see young people who had been considered 'just dropouts' becoming very articulate about their neighborhoods and about the city. You just can't pay for that kind of education."

Zaccardi never looked back. At one point she had 70 kids working every day on video projects. She fought hard for public access to cable, and then set up a pilot youth show. *Hard Cover*, produced by and for teenagers, has been on the air since 1986 and won first place in the Cable Access Youth Competition of the 1991 Hometown USA Festival.

When the Reagan administration eliminated her federal funding, she started an independent production company, Video Services, to make money to funnel back into CTVN. She also successfully lobbied the MacArthur Foundation to set up the Grassroots Production Fund to document community organizing work. Meanwhile, her core operation continues, with classes in three schools reaching 160 young people each year and additional students from all over the city working on the cable access show.

Projects have included interviewing West Side residents about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s visit to Chicago; documenting the campaign of Chicago's first black mayor, the late Harold Washington; examining teenage pregnancy; and focusing on homelessness. ("When we did that one, we had homeless kids coming in, wanting to get involved," recalls Zaccardi.)

"I'm not trying to make them into video people,"



Courtesy videomaker

says Zaccardi. "I'm trying to use video as an educational vehicle, to empower them." She goes on: "There are not a lot of media [outlets] in their neighborhoods, especially media through which people can tell their own stories. Working with video helps connect young people to positive things in their neighborhood; to teach that people standing around on street corners getting high, that's not the whole story; to show them that there is hope, there are positive role models—and not all of them are in Hollywood."

MARY O'CONNELL

Mary O'Connell is a Chicago writer and former editor of The Neighborhood Works.

Bruce Orenstein

ORGANIZING-DRIVEN VIDEO

Chicago Video Project

A poster on the wall in Bruce Orenstein's studio shows Richard Nixon in his farewell salute as he left the Presidency. The caption: "Just remember the difference one tape can make."

It's an apt motto for Orenstein's work. The founder and director of Chicago Video Project, Orenstein is committed to making video a tool for community organizing and social change.

He illustrates by showing a tape he produced for a community group on Chicago's South Side. Enraged at the presence of abandoned buildings in their neighborhood, members of Chicago ACORN (Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now, a national network of neighborhood groups) enlisted Orenstein's help to do something about it.

Orenstein met with group organizers to talk through the campaign. This step, he says, is critical. A tape can't be effective standing alone: it must be part of a well thought-out organizing effort with specific goals and a commitment to follow through. "Often people think video is so powerful that it can make change occur. But change occurs because people organize and amass power," he says.

With campaign goals in place, Orenstein put together a tape carefully structured to support the effort. It documents the problem (shots of children playing in front of deteriorating buildings while a neighborhood resident recounts horror stories of rapes and murders inside), points the finger at government inaction (shots of a city official looking at his watch while community residents press for action), establishes ACORN's credibility (footage of past victories), and lays out group demands.

ACORN showed the tape at neighborhood meetings to arouse public support, and then took it downtown to the aldermen, where it proved especially effective in getting their attention and cooperation. The public pressure pushed the city to double the demolition budget and speed up the process. Shots of the mayor announcing those commitments are incorporated into the latest version of the tape, which will be used in future organizing efforts—and to hold the city to its promises.

"Organizing-driven video must be a continuous process," says Orenstein. "It must be part of the method of organizing, not something grafted on."

Having worked as a community organizer himself for 14 years, he knows what he's talking about. Orenstein's video career began when he taped clips from local television shows documenting problems in Chicago's public schools as part of a citywide school reform effort. "I was surprised at how well it did," he recalls, adding: "Put a 10-minute video up against even the strongest speaker—I don't think even Jesse Jackson could compete in arousing public anger" around an issue.

From there he began to think of ways that tapes could be used "to push the limits of organizing." With support from local foundations and tutoring from Chicago's Columbia College, he put together Chicago Video Project. Today the project operates on a budget of $180,000 with a two-person staff (associate Char Woods brought professional broadcast experience, having worked for several years in public television).

To date, the Chicago Video Project has completed 13 tapes for nine clients, ranging from the Pilsen Resurrection Project to Voices for Illinois Children, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, and the Henry Horner Mother's Guild, with "lots more" in the pipeline. Orenstein is enthusiastic, but also cautious. "You can waste a lot of time, money, and energy in making a video that won't create change. It's not a panacea. But there's been a whole technological revolution happening, and if social change groups can learn to use it, it can be very productive."

MARY O'CONNELL



Courtesy videomaker

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Mindy Faber

VIDEO ARTIST

Delirium

In Chicago's video community—widely thought to be dominated by image processing and technology-based aesthetics—Mindy Faber's work points to the presence of other traditions. As an undergraduate at the University of Kentucky, Faber studied sociology and mass communications; meanwhile, she learned video production at the public access station in Lexington. Attracted to the School of the Art Institute less by its facilities than by the Video Data Bank housed there, with its vast collection of video art, she moved to Chicago in 1983.

Immersing herself in the Video Data Bank collection, Faber found a model for combining her interest in social issues and her impulse toward autobiography in videotapes by the late Lyn Blumenthal, who cofounded Video Data Bank along with its present director, Kate Horsfield, and other producers whose experimental, feminist narratives combined the personal with political analysis. (Faber remains affiliated with the Video Data Bank as associate director.) Citing accessibility as a priority, she has consciously avoided abstract visual imagery and formal structures that may put off viewers unfamiliar with experimental media: "More than anything else I'm interested in communicating my ideas. I want to be able to show [the videos] to my mother's neighbors."

Her mother's neighbors would likely find much of interest in *Suburban Queen* (1985). In just over three minutes, *Suburban Queen* portrays the relationship of a mother and daughter inextricably bonded but puzzled by each other's lives. Faber's narration recounts frustration with her mother's depression and passivity—and a fantasy of how she might transcend these conditions:

> I wanted my mom to be an African suburb queen, fighting the war against household captivity. I wanted fire and anger and screams. Rebellion. Maybe because that's how I was feeling.

Patricia Faber appears in her daughter's tape, wearily demonstrating chores and gamely smearing grime on her face as warpaint. She looks at her daughter across the same chasm of misunderstanding, asking, "Does everyone dress like that in Chicago? Do you ever get depressed?"

In her most recent tape, *Delirium* (1993), Faber takes her inquiry into the mother-daughter relationship much further without having to imagine her mother as a mythic or exoticized figure. She conducts a sensitive interview in which her mother discusses her nervous breakdown, institutionalization, and suicide attempts. Still unsatisfied by her mother's explanations for her depression ("I'm just incommensurable with the world."), Faber turns from the personal to the history of women, madness, and medicine, especially Charcot's photographs of so-called hysterical female patients. Training her feminist eye on this history permits Faber to use it as a tool for better understanding her own life.

At the conclusion of *Delirium*, Faber becomes her own subject and looks humorously at her relationship with her infant son. Similarly in *Identity Crisis* (1989) Faber directed her stepdaughter, Kendra Scheuerlein, in stereotypical female

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Mindy Faber (r) with her mother in *Delirium*.

Courtesy Video Data Bank

roles—from leather-jacketed Tough Chick to sultry Movie Star to Hardworking Lady ("It's a patriarchy out there!"), concluding the tape with outtakes that reveal as much about parents and children as they do about directors and actors.

Faber has occasionally taken the mass media as subject matter (in *Fantasy Radio* [1986] and *State of the Image Union* [1989] among others), but her area of deepest interest is the family. She says that she began exploring her relationship with her mother as "a process of discovery that could allow me to stop making her such an enemy." In using video to make that personal process public, Faber invites all of us with unresolved family relationships to share in her discoveries.

CYNTHIA CHRIS

Cynthia Chris has written about art and media for Afterimage, High Performance, *and other publications.*

Michael Rabiger

DOCUMENTARIAN

Columbia College

Four years ago, Columbia College's Department of Film and Video opened its Documentary Center, and Michael Rabiger, who had taught in the department for 17 years ("nearly everything but lighting," he says), was named the center's director. "There are documentary courses everywhere," Rabiger notes, "but we offer the whole cycle, including history, critical approaches, conceptual planning, proposing, shooting, and postproduction, as well as a walk-in clinic and documentary events."

Although no one keeps tabs on how many students come to Columbia specifically to study with Rabiger, anecdotal evidence suggests that this veteran documentary producer and influential teacher is one of the program's main draws.

Undergraduate Kathy Faul heard of Rabiger from two instructors at the Center for New Television. "They talked of him with almost a reverence," Faul recalls, "and said, 'If you ever get a chance, take a class with him.'" She wasn't lucky enough to get into one of Rabiger's popular classes, but hopes to next fall.

Rabiger's reputation among students of documentary in the U.S. precedes him in part because of his textbook *Directing the Documentary*, published by Focal Press in 1987 and released last year in an expanded second edition, which has sold almost 5,000 copies to date and has been adopted in about 100 schools.

Don Smith, who came to Chicago to take graduate courses with Rabiger and now teaches technical film courses at Columbia, saw the book at the University of New Mexico library. "I renewed it and renewed it for about a year," he chuckles. "It's the nuts and bolts stuff that's so important, like a cookbook of procedures. Michael is an excellent teacher and continually in a learning process himself, so in the time I've known him, I've seen him change his ideas about documentary traditions."

A native of London, Rabiger apprenticed at Pinewood and Shepperton Studios in the 1950s and early 1960s, where he assisted in editing such films as *A Tale of Two Cities* and *A Taste of Honey*. He then moved on the BBC and Granada, where he edited 10 documentaries and then at the BBC directed 21 more before leaving after five years. "I was sometimes in conflict with my department about methods," Rabiger remembers



Courtesy Columbia College Chicago

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with a laugh. "Not really a rebel, just obstinate at the right times. I moved toward giving ordinary people voices and used narrative link pieces when I had to, but I never willingly used narration. My book, in fact, stands for the minority voice; it takes a very anti-authoritarian, anti-establishment approach."

Filmmaker Tod Lending, just nominated for an Emmy as coordinating producer of an after-school special for Harpo Studios and a former student of Rabiger, says, "In documentary education, Michael is definitely this community's mentor." Rabiger is in demand overseas as well. In 1991 he taught a short workshop in Australia; in 1992 it was two frigid months in Norway; and this year he'll spend three weeks in Amsterdam.

"What I appreciate most about him," says filmmaker Loretta Smith, "is his strong sense of social justice." Rabiger's liberal conscience is evident in his film criticism (writing in the *New Art Examiner*, he described *Roger & Me* as "the first film of any kind to rip the smug mask off the Reagan era and reveal the moral rot beneath") and in his own work. His most recent independent project—he's made 10 films in America—is a 55-minute biographical piece titled *Remember You're Fifteen: A Child's Journey through Auschwitz*, shot on Hi8 and in need of funds for music recording and postproduction.

Rabiger is about to take a step toward a more formalized leadership role after being elected a regional board member of the International Documentary Association (IDA), based in Los Angeles. "This gives us the opportunity to form a group here," he says with some urgency. "The most exciting thing is that a group has a clout and a voice and a weight that individuals don't. We can offer documentary filmmakers in the area a chance to network, gain momentum, and exhibit their work." After meeting with IDA officials in March, Rabiger is busy creating a database of people interested in joining a Chicago-based documentary association.

ALYCE BARRY

Alyce Barry publishes the Chicago Filmletter, *a trade paper on feature filmmaking in the Chicago area.*

Dalida Maria Benfield

M E D I A M A K E R

School of the Art Institute

Dalida Maria Benfield's media philosophy is centered on political movement, self-definition, and collaboration. As activist, educator, filmmaker, and video artist, Benfield uses her multicultural fluency to bridge gaps between media organizations, academic institutions, and grassroots com-



Dalida Maria Benfield in *Canal Zone*.

Courtesy Video Data Bank

munities. By doing work on so many turfs, Benfield knows what is going on in distinctly different sectors, and, as an intermediary of sorts, she shares this information with them.

Currently an instructor in video at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Benfield also facilitates media production workshops as an artist-in-residence in elementary schools, high schools, and community organizations throughout the region. She is an educator with Escuela Popular Nortena, a Latino-focused school for political education modeled on the Highlander school in the South, at which civil rights activists were trained in the 1950s and 1960s.

Since 1990, Benfield has produced *Feedback*, a weekly cable access series presenting alternative video and film. Her film/videography lists over a dozen works created independently or collaboratively since 1989. Her most recent work includes *Home Birth/Partos en Casa*, collaboratively produced with Sally Chasnoff and the Chicago Community Midwives, and *The Women of Pilsen*, produced with Maria C. Lugones and 10 women from Pilsen, a predominantly Latino neighborhood in Chicago. Benfield is currently working on two video installations: *Voces y Video*, to accompany a performance by the Latino Experimental Theater Company, and *Canal Zone*, a single-channel, experimental documentary which describes her mother's immigration to the US from Panama and looks at the effects of colonialism and cultural imperialism on her mother's life and her own.

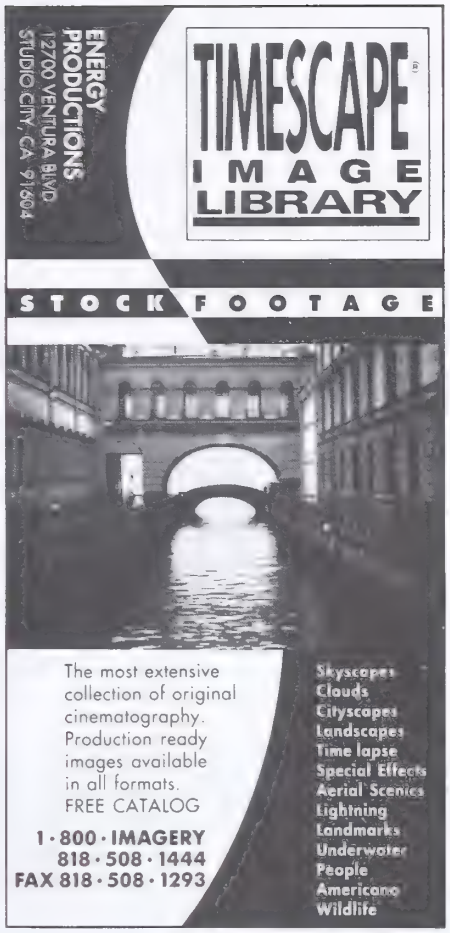
"One of the most important things that happened to me was working for the Community Television Network teaching video at the Latino Youth Alternative High School after receiving my MFA in video production from the School of the Art Institute," says Benfield. "That move facilitated a process of self-transformation, of becoming more consciously identified as a Latina, with an Anglo father and an indigenous Panamanian mother." At first, during this transition from the art world to community-centered production, "I was trying to lose all of what I interpreted as Eurocentric cultural baggage," Benfield recalls, "but I realized that I could not throw my history out of the window. I came to believe that it was my responsibility to share the theoretical information and tools of analysis that I learned in the Academy with those in the Latino community and visa versa."

Benfield's films and videos have always been political. But in her earlier work, "I did not implicate myself," she admits. "I took no risks in terms of my identity. For instance, I was really interested in feminism, but in my work I only included images of white women." Today, Benfield's films and videos investigate the intersections of race, class, gender, and ethnicity. "I superimpose all those issues without privileging one over the other," she says. "For me the only way for us to realize ourselves is to see each other as really complex individuals located in different places according to these different intersecting identities."

Benfield approaches her varied activities with a sense of urgency. "I feel like I have a lot of work to do because there is so much to be done: justice, equality in economic standards of living, cultural integrity." For now Benfield continues to center her work in Latino communities. "I have huge amounts to learn and something to share."

YVONNE WELBON

Yvonne Welbon is a filmmaker and writer who lives in Chicago.



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IN AND OUT OF PRODUCTION

KATHERINE SMITH

How do you tell someone that it's over? What exactly do you say, and how will they react? This agonizing situation is the subject of H.D. Motyl's narrative **Token of Love** (30 min., video), which portrays a gay man's struggle in ending his long-term relationship. The film focuses on the turmoil of the lover walking out of the relationship and the pain he suffers by breaking another's heart. *Token of Love*, Butterfly Hill Productions, 1633 W. Fargo, Chicago, IL 60626; (312) 465-5305.



Breaking Up Is Hard to Do: In H.D. Motyl's *Token of Love*, the Chicago videomaker explores the painful break-up of a gay relationship.

Photo: Brian Worling, courtesy videomaker

Reminding the viewer that prisoners are people with emotional and social needs, **Sentenced to Learn** (54 min., video) takes a personal look at a number of inmates. In his first feature documentary, Zadok Dror introduces us to prisoners in the Chicago metropolitan area who found help through a peer-tutoring literacy program that became part of an educational support system for them. The film explores the prison environment as a community with its own form of social infrastructure. *Sentenced to Learn*, Another Zygote Filmworks, Box 608187, Chicago, IL 60660; (312) 465-5474.

Communities everywhere are concerned with possible environmental contamination that could pose a health threat to local residents. A new model for collaboration between video artists, regional media arts centers, and national networks of citizens and activist groups is presented in Branda Miller's 3-part video project **Witness to the Future** (3 half-hrs., video). Incorporating segments based in rural Louisiana, eastern Washington, and the San Joaquin Valley in California, the project focuses on the environmental dangers in each region. *Witness to the Future*, 911 Media Arts Center, 117 Yale Avenue North, Seattle, WA 98109; (206) 682-6552.

Censorship, artistic freedom, and heavy metal music are all on the bill of **Shut yer Mouth!** (90 min., 16mm to 35mm), a feature film by writer/director Fraser Bresnahan. The plot centers on a fictional rock band, Kids on a Milk Carton, and its troubles with its record label. This politically charged comedy takes a look at the above topics not only as they relate to contemporary society, but also with an eye on the past. *Shut yer Mouth!*, Word of Mouth! Films, 225 Lafayette St., Ste 708, New York, NY 10012; (212) 679-7152.

The Aroma of Enchantment (55 min., Hi 8) is a video essay by Chip Lord that investigates the "idea of America" in Japan. Lord weaves historical stories about General Douglas MacArthur and his own feelings of alienation in the midst of Japanese culture with stories told by Japanese collectors or practitioners of Americanization. Each person interviewed connects his or her concept of America to the post-war occupation period, a time when images and ideas about America were powerfully influential in Japan. *The Aroma of Enchantment*, Chip Lord Projects, 128 Mason St., Santa Cruz, CA 95060; (408) 426-9033.

Most people fail to realize the realities that lesbian and gay teenagers face in their daily lives. "I dropped out of school because I just couldn't deal with it," says Monique, a young Latina who recalls her coming out process in **Homoteens** (30 or 56 min., video). The video focuses on five young people who reveal intense and evolving struggles to assert their identities in a homophobic society. Jubela not only documents her subjects, at times the teens take control of the camera themselves. The result is a highly expressive offering of viewpoints and voices. A study guide to accompany the video will be available in fall 1993. *Homoteens*, Joan Jubela Productions, Box 1966, New York, NY 10013; (212) 226-2462.

The Netherlands is a small country of 15-million people tucked in the northwest corner of Europe. At the heart of Dutch policy is a belief that all social problems have solutions rooted in carefully thought-out programs. **Sex, Drugs & Democracy** (90 min., 35mm) takes an in-depth look at Dutch society, focusing on issues ranging from prostitution, pornography, and drug use to the environment, euthanasia, abortion, and minority rights. The feature, produced by Jonathan Blank and Barclay Powers, will be completed in summer 1993.

In another video, Blank asks who would pay $450,000 for a baseball card? Baseball memorabilia collecting, once a children's hobby, is now a multi-billion dollar industry with thousands of stores, auctions, and conventions nationwide. **Collecting America** (50 min., video), directed by Jonathan Blank, takes a satirical look at the hobby-turned-business and seeks to understand the fascination collectors have with baseball history. Both *Sex, Drugs & Democracy* and *Collecting America*, Red Hat Productions, 222 W. 14th St., New York, NY 10011.

ATTENTION AIVF MEMBERS

The **In and Out of Production** column is a regular feature in *The Independent*, designed to give AIVF members an opportunity to keep the organization and others interested in independent media informed about current work. We profile works-in-progress as well as recent releases. These are not critical reviews, but informational descriptions. AIVF members are invited to submit detailed information about their latest film or videotape for inclusion in **In and Out of Production**. Send descriptions and black and white photographs to: *The Independent*, 625 Broadway, 9th floor, New York, NY 10012; attn: In and Out of Production.

Domestic

AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM/VIDEO FESTIVAL, Oct. 15-17, CA. 64th annual fest for works in cats: amateur, college students, commercial, high school & grade school students. Cash awards, trophies, certificates. Entry fee: $5 & return postage. Formats: 16mm, 8mm, 1/2". Deadline: Sept. 24. Contact: American Motion Picture Society, Box 4034, Long Beach, CA 90804-0034.

CHICAGO LESBIAN AND GAY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, November, IL. 2nd oldest fest of its kind showcases int'l lesbian & gay film & video programs. 1992 fest, attended by 10,000, presented over 100 films/videos. Held at Music Box Theatre & Chicago Filmmakers. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Chicago Filmmakers, 1229 W. Belmont Ave, Chicago, IL 60657; (312) 281-8788; fax: 0389.

CINEQUEST: SAN JOSE FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 20-24, CA. Now in 4th yr, fest showcases ind. features & short films "w/ ground-breaking artistic & social merit."Annual theme is "Maverick Filmmaking"; fest incl. jury competition, tributes & Film Feasts (thematic events of film, food & entertainment). Cinequest also manages foundation w/ grant program that aids ind. filmmakers w/ exhibition & distribution. Deadline: Aug. 2. Contact: Cinequest IV, P.O. Box 720040, San Jose, CA 95172-0040; (408) 995-6305; fax: (408) 277-3862.

COLUMBUS INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, October, OH. Now in 41st yr, competitive fest accepts nontheatrical films & videos. Cats: arts & culture, business & industry, education, health & medicine, media of print, natural sciences, religion & philosophy, screenwriting, social issues, student films & videos, TV short form, travel & recreation. Awards: Chris Award in each cat, bronze plaques, honorable mentions, certificates of participation, special awards. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Columbus International Film & Video Festival, 5701 North High St., Ste 204, Worthington, OH 43085; (614) 841-1666.

DALLAS VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov. 11-14, TX. Presented by Video Association of Dallas & Dallas Museum of Art, fest is one of larger diversified video fests in US. It "even-handedly shows the state of the medium—as art, as entertainment, as document, as archive & as commerce." Fest offers programs such as KIDVID (children's programs & workshops), broad look at cur–rent works by nat'l & int'l ind. producers & Texas Show, featuring new work by Texas artists. Deadline: Aug. 2. Contact: Dallas Video Festival, Video Association of Dallas, 215-A Henry St, Dallas, TX 75226; (214) 651-8888; fax: 8896.

DENVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 14-21, CO. Invitational & noncompetitive fest will screen more than 100 films from US & throughout world in 16th edition. Sections incl. Contemporary Cinema (new int'l fiction works), doc, New Director's Showcase, short subjects & live-action & animated children's films. Fest presents 4th annual John Cassavetes Award to US ind. film artist. Fest will focus on films w/ human rights themes. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: July 15. Contact: Ron Henderson, Denver International Film Festival, 999 18th St., Ste 1820, Denver, CO 80202; (303) 298-8223; fax: 0209.

HEARTLAND FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 22-27, IN. Fest invites feature & short (under 50 min.) film entries in all cats, incl. dramatic, doc & children's (live action &/or animation); purpose is "to recognize & honor filmmakers whose work explores the human journey by artistically expressing hope & respect for the positive values of life." Crystal Heart Awards & $100,000 in cash awards; min. of $20,000/feature & $5,000/short. Entry fee: $45 (feature), $15 (short). Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 1/2". Deadline: July 1. Contact: Jeffrey L. Sparks, artistic director, Heartland Film Festival, 613 North East St., Indianapolis, IN 46202.

MILL VALLEY FILM FESTIVAL AND VIDEOFEST, October 7-17, CA. Now in 16th yr, fest screens narrative, doc, animated, shorts & experimental films & videos. Emphasis on new work not widely seen, particularly in Northern CA. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", Beta SP. Entry fee: $12. Deadline: June 30. (Features, particularly premieres, may be accepted for late submission.) Contact: Zoe Elton, Mill Valley Film Festival & Videofest, 38 Miller Ave, Ste 6, Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-5256; fax: 8606.

MIX: NEW YORK LESBIAN AND GAY EXPERIMENTAL FILM/VIDEO FESTIVAL, Sept. 9-19, NY. 7th yr of program will consist of 9 shows w/ guest curators incl. programs addressing African diaspora, S. Asian, Brazilian & Chinese lesbian/gay/bisexual sexualities, lesbian/bi punk, porn, queer/anti-queer propaganda, dance/movement, the body on pins & needles & shows curated by fest committee. All genres accepted. Formats: 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: June 15. Contact: Jim Hubbard, New York Lesbian & Gay Experimental Film/Video Festival, 503 Broadway, Ste 503, New York, NY 10012; (212) 925-5883.

TELLURIDE FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 3-6, CO. Selective fest in 20th yr, held Labor Day wknd, programs new US & foreign features & docs, attracting media & cross-section of professional community. Features & shorts accepted. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Entry fee: $35 under 55 min.; $55 over 55 min. Deadline: July 31. Contact: Bill Pence/Stella Pence, Telluride Film Festival, Nat'l Film Preserve, Box 1156, Hanover, NH 03755; (603) 643-1255.

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser, director of the FIVF Festival Bureau. Listings do not constitute an endorsement. Since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. In order to improve our reliability and make this column more beneficial to independents, we encourage all film- and videomakers to contact FIVF Festival Bureau with their personal festival experiences, positive and negative.

Foreign

CORK FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 3-10, Ireland. In 38th yr as major noncompetitive showcase for world cinema & Irish film art; interested in art of short film (in 1992 more than 100 shorts screened) & social, cultural & political docs. Entries accepted in cats of feature films for the cinema; feature films & programs for TV; doc films; short films; & contemporary films made in b & w (com–petitive section only). Program also incl. "Focus On" devoted to young filmmakers, seminars, exhibitions, schools' program & fest club. Screenings take place in Cork Opera House & Triskel Arts Centre. Entries must be recent prods not previously screened or broadcast in Ireland. No entry fee, but enclose 10 stamped Int'l Reply Coupons for return of preview cassette. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: July 16. Contact: Fran Bergin/Donal Sheehan, Cork Film Festival, Hatfield House, Tobin St, Cork, Ireland; tel: 353 21 271711; fax: 353 21 275945.

FESTIVAL DEI POPOLI INTERNATIONAL REVIEW OF SOCIAL DOCUMENTARY FILM, Nov. 26-Dec. 4, Italy. Now in 34th edition, all doc fest incl. several sections: Competition, Film & Art, Film & History, Cinema on Cinema, New Trends, Ethno-Anthropology, Current Events. Cinema & Music (Screen of Sounds). Fest will also present retro on Europe during Cold War. Entries must be docs completed after Sept. 1, 1992, on social, political & anthro. issues. Features & shorts accepted. Awards: Best Doc (lire 15,000,000), Best Research (lire 5,000,000), Best Ethnographic Doc (Gian Paolo Paoli silver plaque), Best Doc nominated by Student Jury. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4" (produced or distributed by TV network). Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: Mario Simondi, Sec. General, Festival Dei Popoli, Via dei Castellani 8, 50122 Florence, Italy; tel: 39 55 294353; fax: 39 55 213698.

$100 FILM FESTIVAL, May 1, Canada. Fest "celebrates the informal, spontaneous, & direct nature of 8mm filmmaking." Promotes low-budget filmmaking & encourages ind. filmmakers. Films of any genre should use only as much as can be purchased, shot, or processed for less than $100. All entries accepted. Contact: $100 Film Festival, Calgary Society of Ind. Filmmakers, Box 30089, Stn B, Calgary, AB T2M 4N7, Canada.

LEIPZIG INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF DOCUMENTARY AND ANIMATION FILMS, Nov. 25-Dec. 1, Germany. Under motto "Films of the World—For Hum–an Dignity," fest, in 36th yr, focuses on doc & animated film & video. Program incl. int'l competition, special programs, retro, film & video market & general events. Competition incl. cinema or TV doc films of all genres & lengths, video prods (doc & animated) for cinema & TV, animation films. Int'l jury awards: Golden Dove & DM9,000 & Silver Dove & DM5,000 to films & videos for cinema & TV over 45 min. & to entries under 45 min.; Golden Dove & DM6,000 & Silver Dove & DM4,000 to animation films for cinema & TV; Egon Erwin Kisch prize plus DM5,000 to best journalistic prod, Int'l Mercedes Benz grant for doc film; 4 other awards. Prods must not have been shown in public prior to June 1 of previous yr (for competition). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Sept. 10. Contact: Dokfestival Leipzig, Postfach 940, 04009 Leipzig, Germany (after July 1); tel/fax: 49 341 294660.

LONDON INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, November, UK. Fest director Sheila Whitaker and deputy director Rosa Bosch will again work w/ FIVF to collect & ship films & videos for selection in 5th yr of one of Europe's largest forums for US ind. prod.

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Fest, in 37th yr, is invitational, noncompetitive & particularly interested in children's films for program prior to fest. Sections: Electronic Image; Art & Experiment; Animation (all of which may incl. US inds.); British, French & Italian Panoramas; Africa, Asia & Latin America; & children's films. Screening venues incl. National Film Theatre, Odeon Leicester Square, Odeon West End & Empire. Attended by large audiences, over 700 buyers & British/int'l media. Entries must be UK premieres. Fiction & docs of all lengths, genres accepted. Fest formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4"; preview on cassette (pref. VHS) only. For info & appli–cations, send SASE or contact: Kathryn Bowser, FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400. Deadline: July 16 through FIVF; Aug. 10 if directly to LFF. Fest address: London International Film Festival, South Bank, London SE1 8XT, England; tel: 071 815 1322/1323; fax: 071 633 0786.

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF NEW FILM AND VIDEO, Oct. 21-31, Canada. Now in 22nd edition, noncompetitive showcase is int'l meeting place for new cinema & video owing much of its success to warm atmosphere created by organizers & to promotion given to assist selected films/videos in their distribution. Special awards, voted on by Quebec Film Critics Association & sponsored by the Banque Laurentienne: $5,000 for best feature; $1.000 for best short; $2,000 for best video, $3,000 for best doc. Feature length & short drama, fiction videos & film & docs accepted. Entries must be produced 21 mos. prior to fest & unscreened in Quebec. Entry fee: $50 (per film/ video). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2", Beta. Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Claude Chamberlan, Festival International du Nouveau Cinema & de la Video de Montreal, 3726, Blvd. St.-Laurent, Montréal, Québec, Canada H2X 2V8; tel: (514) 843-4725; fax: (514) 843-4631.

MONTREAL WORLD FILM FESTIVAL, August, Canada. Only competitive fest in N. America recog–nized by FIAPF, now in 17th yr. Annual audiences over 280,000; 250 films programmed. Sections: Official Competition; Hors Concours (out of competition); British Cinema of Today; Latin American Cinema; Cinema of Today: Reflections of Our Time; Cinema of Tomorrow: New Trends; Panorama Canada; TV films. Also Int'l Films, TV & Video Market, Tributes. Features & shorts accepted. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 3/4". Deadline: July 8. Contact: Serge Losique or Danièle Cauchard, Montreal World Film Festival, 1455 Blvd. de Maissoneuve W., Montreal, Quebec H3G 1M8, Canada; tel: (514) 848-3883; fax: (514) 848-3886.

ONE MINUTE WORLD FESTIVAL, November, Brazil. Films, videos & animated works on any theme w/ 60-second max. length (3-second minimum) invited to participate in 2 cats: int'l competitive exhibition w/ 5 winners; geographical groups (eg., German, Spanish, Brazilian, US, French, etc.). Program will be exhibited in cultural centers around world; 1st week of Dec., int'l jury will award best 5 works in São Paulo. Prizes: flight tickets to Brazil. Formats: 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: $10. Deadline: July 31. Contact: Agencia Observatorio, Rua Prof. Rubiao Meira, 50, Sao Paulo, Brazil 05409-202; tel/fax: 55 11 851 2846.

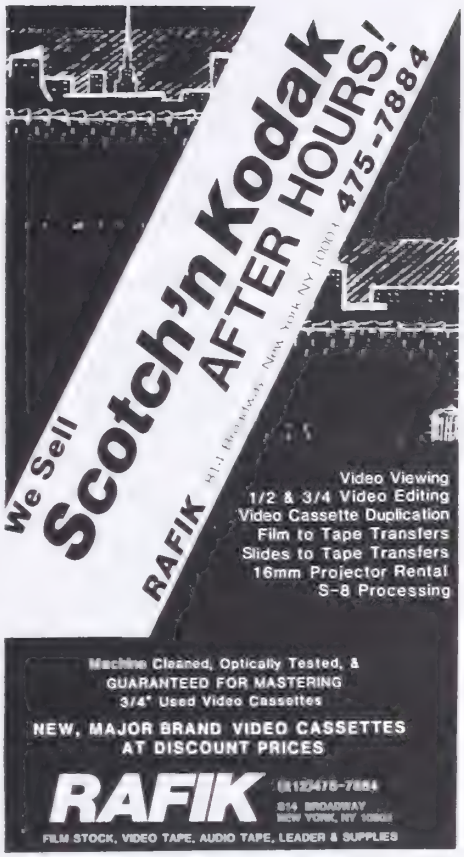
TORONTO FESTIVAL OF FESTIVALS, September, Canada. Noncompetitive celebration of film w/ wide ranging program playing to int'l audiences, incl. large press contingent. Fest is major event on circuit, w/ many films receiving world & N. American premieres & w/ reputation for programming innovative, alternative,

experimental films. More than 200 features from 40 countries participate, incl. over 75 shorts & docs. Cats: Galas (premieres of major new prods); Contemporary World Cinema ("most recent & engaging films" from several countries); Perspective Canada; Edge; Special Presentations; Midnight Madness; Nat'l Cinema & Spotlight. 2-day Trade Forum industry sidebar held during fest. Entries completed after Sept. 1, 1992. Short films must be by Canadian producers. No entry fee. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: July 9. Contact: Piers Handling, Festival of Festivals, 70 Carlton St, Toronto, Ontario M5B 1L7, Canada; tel: (416) 967-7371; fax: (416) 967-9477.

TOULON INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF MARITIME AND EXPLORATION FILMS, Nov. 23-27, France. Annual competitive fest of sea & underwater adventure films, now in 25th yr. Entries must be about the sea or exploration (oceanology, archeology, history, underwater exploration, ethnography, sport, environment, fiction). Feature & short films & videos accepted; entries completed in previous 3 yrs only. Awards: Golden/Silver/Bronze Anchor, French Navy Prize, ROLEX Prize for Protection of Underwater World, World Confederation of Underwater Activities Prize, Young Filmmakers Prize, FUJI Prize for film, Francois de Roubaix Prize for music. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", Beta SP. Deadline: Sept. 15. Contact: International Festival of Maritime & Exploration Films, 14, rue Peiresc, 83000 Toulon, France; tel: 33 94 92 99 22; fax: 33 94 91 35 65.

TURIN INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FILM FESTIVAL CINEMA GIOVANI, Nov. 12-20, Italy. Now in 11th yr, fest is competitive showcase for new, young ind. directors & filmmaking trends; held in northern Italy's Piedmont region. US liaison Michael Solomon preselects entries for several sections. Int'l Competition for Feature Films: 35mm & 16mm Italian premieres by young filmmakers completed after Aug. 1, 1992. Short Film Competition: films up to 30 min. Noncompetitive section: films 30-60 min., important premieres & works by jury members. Turin Space: films, videos & super 8 films by directors from Piedmont region. Special Events: short retros, screenings of up & coming directors' works, reviews of significant moments in ind. filmmaking. Awards: best feature film (lire 20,000,000); 3 prizes for short films (lire 3,000,000, lire 2,000,000, lire 1,500,000). Additional awards may incl.: special jury awards & special mentions. Audiences approach 35,000 w/ 20 nations represented & 150 journalists. About 300 films shown during event. Entry fee: $10, payable to Cross Productions. Formats: 35mm, 16mm only; preview on 3/4" or 1/2". Deadline: July 31. Contact: Michael Solomon, Cross Prods, 625 Broadway, 12th fl, New York, NY 10012; (212) 777-0557; fax: (212) 777-0738.

VANCOUVER INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, October 1-17, Canada. Founded in 1982, event has become one of N. America's larger int'l film events. Only feature-length films (70 min. & over) that have not been screened commercially or broadcast in British Columbia eligible. Sections: Canadian Images; Dragons & Tigers: Cinema of East Asia; Cinema of Our Time; Nonfiction Features; After Midnight. About 200 films representing 40 countries shown. Awards: Air Canada Award for Most Popular Film, decided by audience ballot. National Film Board of Canada Awards (cash prizes). Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. No entry fee. Deadline: July 16. Contact: Alan Franey, Vancouver Int'l Film Festival, 1008 Homer St., Ste 410, Vancouver, B.C., Canada, V6B 2M1; tel: (604) 685-0260; fax: (604) 688-8221.



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September 27 - October 4, 1993
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The Market will be held this year from September 27 - October 4 at the Angelika Film Center. As always, we need volunteers who are eager to be involved with this exciting event. Volunteers are the backbone of IFFM operations every year and volunteering is an excellent introduction to the world of independent filmmaking and distribution. We need volunteers to process film entries, work with filmmakers and buyers, register participants, staff the hospitality suite and much more. Be a part of the Market while earning a membership in the Independent Feature Project.

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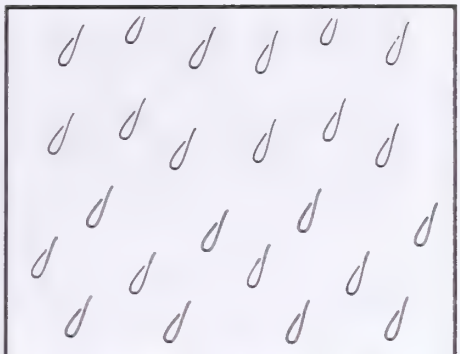
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— Elisa Kahn-Ellis, composer

Conferences ▪ Seminars

COLLEGE ART ASSOCIATION's annual conference, Feb. 1994, seeks proposals/presentations on ind. video from lesbian & gay mediamakers, scholars, historians & critics. Panels will combine papers, presentations & excerpts from prods, mapping medium's diversity & various roles it has played in lesbian & gay self-representation. Possible themes incl.: how ind. video has (or has not) functioned as bridge between gender, race, ethnicity & class w/in community; ind. lesbian & gay video's distinct relationship w/ institutional art video & queer film; the future of lesbian & gay ind. prod.. Submit outlines, proposals, etc., to: Jane Cottis/ John Di Stefano, 328 Museum Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90065.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars covering a wide range of topics, from 16mm film & video prod. to fundraising, distribution, screen–writing, special effects & guest lectures. Technical workshops are small, hands-on; all are taught by professionals in the field. For info, contact: FAF, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl, San Francisco, CA, 94103; (914) 552-8760.

INTERNATIONAL MARKET FOR EUROPEAN DOCUMENTARIES is hosting a special American Corner for US doc producers, distributors & broadcasters, June 17-20, in Marseilles, France. Commissioning editors & buyers from all major European TV networks attend. Reduced rates for Americans this yr only. Contact: Jane Weiner or Lily Frericks; tel: (33-1) 42-02-17-17; fax: (33-1) 42-038-60-44. Or contact: Doc Services, 3 Square Stalingrad, 13001 Marseille, France; tel: (33) 91-08-43-15; fax: (33) 91-84-38-34.

MEDIA ALLIANCE offers workshops for emerging media artists, providing information to those interested in breaking into the media arts field. Led by professional artists & arts administrators, workshops offer tips on obtaining low-cost equipment & facilities, funding, etc. June 10, 6-8 p.m., Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse & 165th St., Bronx, NY; June 12, 1-3 p.m., Int'l Agency for Minority Artists Affairs, Adam Clayton Powell Jr., State Office Bldg., Art Gallery, 2nd fl., 163 West 125th St., New York, NY. For more info, contact: Media Alliance, c/o Thirteen/WNET, 356 West 58th St., New York, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

MONTAGE 93: Int'l Festival of the Image celebrates fusion of art & tech & explores future of visual communications, July 11-Aug. 7, NY. Exhibitions, trade show, lectures, symposia & arts performances. Call for info: (800) 724-4332.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF MEDIA ARTS CENTERS (NAMAC) conference, Rewiring Our Networks, June 3-6, Chicago. Cosponsored by AIVF. Registration: $115 individual members, $125 individual nonmembers; $140 institutional members, $195 institutional nonmembers. Single-day registration: $50 members, $60 nonmembers. To register, send checks to: NAMAC, 1212 Broadway, Ste 816, Oakland, CA 94612; (510) 451-2717.

REPLITECH INT'L presents 3-day conference & expo for duplicators & replicators of video & audio tape, optical discs & floppy disks, June 15-17, Santa Clara, CA. Contact: Benita Roumanis, Knowledge Industry Pubs, 701 Westchester Ave., White Plains, NY 10604; (914) 328-9157; fax: 9093.

SOUTHEASTERN MEDIA INSTITUTE, July 24-Aug. 6, sponsored by South Carolina Arts Commission Media Arts Center, offers intensive professional media workshops in cinematography, video prod., video editing, directing & producing. Weekend seminars include scriptwriting, film criticism, low-budget narratives, grants for film/video & producing the personal doc. Reduced rates for registration by July 2. Campus housing available. For brochure, contact: S. Carolina Arts Commission Media Arts Center, 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201; (803) 734-8696.

YELLOWSTONE MEDIA ARTS 1993 Summer Workshops, June, MT. Intensive workshops offered in the heart of the Rockies, incl.: Film Directing (June 5-6); Images of Women (June 7-18); Contemporary European Film & TV (June 7-25). Contact: MSU Summer Session, 303 Montana Hall, MSU, Bozeman, MT 59717; (406) 994-6683.



Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length. Deadlines for Notices will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., June 8 for the August/September issue). Send to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Films ▪ Tapes Wanted

ACADEMIC STUDY seeks films, videos & photographs for research & eventual doc on women artists' image of self. Contact: Julie Simon, University of Baltimore, 1420 N. Charles St., Baltimore Maryland 21201; (410) 234-3924; fax: (410) 539-3714.

AMERICAN EXPERIENCE, nat'l PBS series, seeks hr-long films & tapes in development, prod. or completed. Seeks stories that evoke sense of drama in history & offer unique perspectives. Contact: Lew Smith, series editor, The American Experience, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA; (617) 492-2777 ext. 4313.

AXELGREASE, wkly public access program, seeks experimental, narrative, animation, doc & computer imaging under 27 min. Showcases video & film on Buffalo access & around US. Send 1/2", 3/4", Beta, 8mm, or Hi8 tapes to: Axlegrease, c/o Squeaky Wheel, Buffalo Media Resources, 372 Connecticut St., Buffalo, NY 14213; (716) 884-7172.

BAD TWIN, NY-based prod./exhibition collective, seeks films under 30 min. for ongoing programs in Europe & US. Alternative approaches to all genres & forms welcomed. Must have finished 16mm prints avail. Submit VHS only for preview; incl. SASE for return. Contact: Bad Twin, Box 528, Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276.

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable TV System, seeks works by ind. video & filmmakers for access airing. BRONXNET produces programs & facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, (718) 960-1180.

CABLE ACCESS SHOW seeks short drama, doc, animation & experimental films/videos. Interested parties should send 3/4" copies to: Quick Flicks c/o Eugene Haynes, 814 10th Ave., #3A, New York, NY 10019 or call (212) 642-5236.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video art interstitials to play btwn alternative music videos on Seattle's TCI/ Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTER FOR NEW TV (CNTV) seeks 3/4", VHS or Hi8 work for cable access show. Contact: CNTV, 1440 N. Dayton St., Chicago, IL 60622.

CENTRAL AMERICAN NEWS PROJECT seeks indivs to produce news & public affairs pieces for monthly access show on Central America. Contribute footage or contacts w/ people in CA w/ film or video equip. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St., Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Contact: Cine Accion, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks works on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Laura Greenfield, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (213) 458-8590.

COMEDY CENTRAL seeks comedic student/ind. films & videos up to 3 min. to air on its flagship program, Short Attention Span Theater. Must have broadcast rights. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes to: Josh Lebowitz, HBO Downtown Prods, 120 E. 23rd St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10010; (212) 512-8851.

DEEP DISH TV seeks tapes on healthcare for 94 season. Deadline: Aug. 1993. Contact: Cynthia Lopez, programming director, Deep Dish TV, 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012; (212) 473-8933.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" Beta & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, Middle East, gay/ lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Tanya Steele, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Please contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Ronhert Park, CA 94928.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on varied subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, Ste 4768, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10112.

FLICKTURES seeks 2-5 min. comedy prods, any genre, any style, to air on L.A. cable access; possible deferred pay. Send 3/4", 1/2", Beta or super 8 w/ SASE to:

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FORUM Gallery seeks submissions for its PhotoNominal '94, nat'l exhibition of work utilizing any photographic processes. Encourages innovative approaches to content, style, process. Catalog accompanies show. Deadline: July 16. No fees or appls. Send max. of 10 35mm slides of your work (incl. name, dimensions of work, title & media on each slide), resumé & related support material w/ SASE for return of materials to: PhotoNominal 94, Forum Gallery, Box 20, Jamestown, NY 14702-0020. For info, contact: Dan Talley or Michelle Henry (716) 665-9107.

LATINO COLLABORATIVE bimonthly screening series seeks works by Latina/o film- & videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Euridice Arrati/Karim Ainouz, 280 Broadway, Ste 412, New York, NY 10007; (212) 732-1121; fax: (212) 732-1297.

LESBIANS IN THE CREATIVE ARTS (LICA) invites submissions of original works for an Evening w/ LICA video cabaret. Artists must own all rights. Contact: Video, Ste 443, 496A Hudson St., New York, NY 10014.

MINORITY TELEVISION PROJECT, Bay Area multicultural public TV station, invites programming from ind. directors, producers & writers who have person of color in key creative position & present crosscultural perspectives. Children's, entertainment, animation, features, health, education & lifestyles sought. Submit 1/2" or 3/4" tapes (orig. must be on 3/4" or 1" for broadcast.) to: John Weber, programming director, 1311 Sutter St., San Francisco, CA 94109; (415) 394-5687.

NOMAD VIDEO seeks works from videomakers of all ages, backgrounds & skill levels for monthly screenings. Screenings showcase grassroots artists at changing locations around Seattle area. Send VHS, S-VHS or Hi8 & SASE to: Gavin the Nomad, 501 N. 36th St #365, Seattle, WA 98103; (206) 781-0653.

OPEN CITY cable series invites indivs., groups & orgs. to submit proposals to produce new cable programming, to air as part of "Artwaves," Hallwalls Contemporary Art Centers' weekly cable access program. Open City provides honoraria, prod. & postprod. facilities & technical assistance for indivs to produce programming of interest to diverse urban & rural communities in Western New York. Submissions should include 1-page project description, time-frame for prod. & postprod. & applicant's technical experience. Three projects will be selected. Applicants must be residents of Erie, Niagara, Allegany, Cattaragus, or Chautauqua counties. Student projects not eligible. Contact: Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center, 700 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14202; (716) 854-5828.

PACIFIC ARTS seeks selected domestic & foreign ind. projects—narrative, animation, doc, experimental & performance—to air on wkly cable access show. Any theme, any length. Projects credited. Submit 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Pacific Arts, Box 533, Farmington, MI 48332-0533.

PERALTA COLLEGES TV (PCTV), multicultural educational station reaching 200,000 homes in Oakland-Berkeley area, seeks challenging social-issue docs & culturally diverse TV programs. Rare alternative outlet in Bay area. Excellent exposure. Submit 3/4" or VHS tape w/ short description & letter granting local cablecast rights to: PCTV programming, 900 Fallon St., Oakland, CA 94607; (510) 464-3253.

PMS (POST-MODERN SISTERS), nat'ly touring exhibition program, is looking for innovative & challenging short films by women for future programs. Contact: Lisa Austin (415) 648-3810 or Susanne Fairfax (415) 751-3507.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests non-commercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

QUICK FLICKS, NYC ind. cable access TV show, seeks short subject drama, doc, animation & experimental films & videos. Send 3/4" U-matic copies to Quick Flicks c/o Eugene Haynes, 814 10th Ave., #3A, New York, NY 10019; (212) 642-5236.

REEL TIME, monthly film series at Performance Space 122, seeks experimental, doc & narrative films. Submit super 8 & 16 mm to: Jim Browne, c/o Reel Time, P.S. 122, 150 1st Ave., New York, NY 10009; (212) 477-5288.

TOONTOWN RATS, Artists TV Access' new animation forum, seeks animated shorts. Send submissions to: Artists Television Access, 992 Valencia St., San Francisco, CA 94110; or contact Keith Knight, (415) 752-4037/824-3890.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, cablecast on DUTV, Drexel University's channel 54, seeks narrative, animation, experimental, performance & doc works by young film-makers from Philly & elsewhere. Show reaches 767,000 households in 3 states. Contact: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

VENEZUELAN FILMS & VIDEOS sought for inclusion in travelling retrospective of Venezuelan cinema. Any genre, format or date. New feature work also of interest. For info, contact: Karen Schwartzman, 78 Jane St., Upper Apt., New York, NY 10014; ph/fax: (212) 691-6646.

VIRTUAL FOCUS seeks submissions of doc, narrative & art videos for monthly public screenings. Send VHS copies to: Virtual Focus, 6019 Sunset Blvd., Ste 133, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 250-8118.

VOYAGER, joint venture of Janus Films & Voyager Press, accepts videotape submissions (VHS, 3/4") for review & possible inclusion in survey of ind. media art produced in 1992 & 1993. Looking for short form films/videos to anthologize on laserdisc & distribute in home video market. Send tapes & support materials by Aug. 1 to: Eric Saks, The Voyager Company, 1351 Pacific Coast Highway, Santa Monica, CA 90401.

WILLOW MIXED MEDIA seeks Amiga-based works for Amiga Artists on the Air, programs distributed on cable access & video. Small fee. Submit material on 3.5" Amiga disks, VHS, 3/4" tape to: Toby Carey, Willow Mixed Media, Box 194, Lenox Ave., Glenford, NY 12433; (914) 657-2914.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database which incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & biographical data. Contact: Helen Lee, Women of Color in Media Arts Database, Women Make Movies, 225 Lafayette, Ste 207, New York, NY 10012; (212) 925-0606.

WYOU-TV, cable access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for wkly alternative music show.

Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

Opportunities ▪ Gigs

TRAINED INTERNS AVAILABLE: The Educational Video Center is trying to place NYC youth trained in all aspects of 3/4" and Beta SP video documentary production in meaningful positions for the summer. Film, video, doc, narrative, pre- & postprod. positions welcome. Some internships to be subsidized by EVC. Contact: David Murdock, EVC at (212) 254-2848 for details.

WOMEN IN THE DIRECTOR'S CHAIR, a nonprofit media arts organization dedicated to exhibiting & promoting films & videos by women that reflect a diversity of cultures, experiences & lifestyles, announces f/t position as program director to work w/ exec. director building new audiences for ind. media. Significant experience w/ knowledge of alternative/ind. media (including curating, booking, hosting presentations, prod., distribution, education & criticism) &/or experience working w/ nonprofit media arts organizations required. Responsibilities incl. coordination of WIDC's annual Int'l Film & Video Festival, Regional Tour, Prison Program & outreach programs. Appls, including cover letter explaining qualifications & approach to ind. women's media, resumé & list of 3 refs (detailing relationship to you) w/ addresses & phone numbers must be received by June 15. EOE. Women of color urged to apply. Send materials to: WIDC, 3435 N. Sheffield, Chicago, IL 60657 or call (312) 281-4988.

COLUMBIA COLLEGE, Chicago, is accepting appls & nominations for Chairperson of the Film/Video Dept. Position is avail. Sept. 1, 1993. Dept. emphasizes prod. & comprises 15 f/t faculty, 20 support staff & 60 p/t working professionals. Program incls 900+ student BA program in filmmaking, animation & video prod. & 100+ MFA in screen authorship w/ either narrative fiction or doc emphasis. Chair provides educational vision as well as administrative & artistic leadership. Req.: experience in film/video prod., strong knowledge & commitment to film education; knowledge of traditional & new prod. techniques & ability to develop relationships w/ film/video industry. Extensive administrative experience & ability to foster cooperative atmosphere should be combined w/ budgetary & fundraising skill. Competitive salary & excellent benefits. Minorities & women encouraged to apply. Submit resumé & statement of teaching philosophy (no phone calls please) to: Film/Video Chair Search, Human Resources Dept, Columbia College, 600 S. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL 60605.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE BROADCASTERS seeks ambitious college grad for 2-6 yr position as executive director/CEO supervising small, nonprofit corporation. Requirements: BA, 1 yr. postgrad management & fundraising experience, knowledge of professional/commercial media, experience in student-run radio/TV, writing/communications skills, organizational & supervisory skills, accounting/budgeting experience, computer literacy, marketing experience & ability to conceive, sell & execute coventure projects. Duties include generating funds via nonprofit development fundraising and conceiving earned income projects, consult/refer member staitons seeking help, supervise association director in coordinating national conference, serve as liaison to exec. advisory & trustee boards, coordinate NACB appearances, serve as spokesperson

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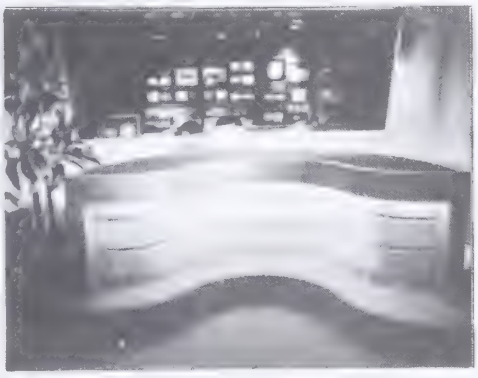
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for outside media. Deadline for appl.: July 31. Send resumé w/ cover letter. Please discuss specific ideas to increase funding. Start date: Sept. 7. Send to: NACB, 71 George St., Box 1824, Providence, RI 02912-1824. Call Glenn Gutmacher (401) 863-2225.

Publications

CINEMAYA, a pan-Asian film quarterly, will arrange for filmmakers to attend Asian film fests & distribute films & videos in Asia. For more information, contact: V. Sarkar, Cinemaya, 425 East 51st St., Box 7E, New York, NY 10022; (212) 759-4568; fax: (212) 867-7726.

CRITICAL ESSAYS ON GERMAN CINEMA, anthology currently being edited for R. Gottesman & H. Geduld's Critical Essays on Film Series, seeks papers. Papers analyzing film texts of German cinema from silent period to present welcome as are metacritical elaborations of these films &/or theoretical frameworks through which they are read. Deadline: July 1. Send new papers or published articles to both: Kirsten Thompson, 103 St. Mark's Park, #5C, New York, NY 10009 & Terri Ginsberg, 80 Central Park West, #15H, New York, NY 10023.

MEDIATING HISTORY: THE MAP GUIDE TO INDEPENDENT VIDEO by & about African American, Asian American, Latino & Native American people. Edited by Barbara Abrash & Catherine Egan. Invaluable guide to multicultural historical videos incl. annotated list of 126 works; insightful essays by film scholars & programmers; overviews by media critics on media & teaching of history; alternative media directory; thematic & chronological indices. 200 pgs. $12.95 paper/$30 cloth. Avail. from New York University Press, 70 Washington Square S., New York, NY 10012; (212) 998-2575; fax: (212) 995-3833.

NAMAC offers 1992 member directory, up-to-the-minute compilation of resource & contact info relevant to media arts, community, cultural & educational orgs & mediamakers. Incl. descriptions of 132 media arts centers in US & Canada w/ org history, mission, budget, collections, demographics of audiences & artists, facilities, publications, etc. Send check payable to NAMAC for $25 nonmembers/$12 NAMAC members to: NAMAC, 1212 Broadway, Ste 816, Oakland, CA 94612.

Resources ▪ Funds

CREATIVE TIME sponsors projects by visual & performing artists as part of ongoing citywide series. Goal to bring art to untapped sites in NYC. No deadline; proposals reviewed every 3-4 mo. Send 5 copies of project description; description of desired public site; technical assessment, incl. consideration of vandalism, security, projects material stability & utilities description; resumés of all participants; budget; up to 10 slides of past work of each participant w/ accompanying descriptions; 1/2" or 3/4" video of past work, no longer than 5 min., w/ explanatory notes; sketches & drawings to clarify proposal & SASE to: Creative Time, 131 W. 24th St., New York, NY 10011-1942; (212) 206-6674; fax: (212) 255-8467.

FILM PRESERVATION PROGRAM, joint program of Nat'l Endowment for Arts & Nat'l Center for Film & Video Preservation at American Film Institute, awards grants to help orgs preserve & restore films of artistic or cultural value. Tax-exempt orgs can apply. Must have

archival film collection, adequate staff & equipment to carry out project. Grants are matching, generally less than $25,000. For appl. & info, contact: AFI/NEA Film Preservation Program, National Center for Film & Video Preservation at AFI, John F. Kennedy Ctr., Washington, DC 20566; (202) 828-4070.

FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR PROGRAM for US faculty & professionals offers grants for research, research & lecturing, or university lecturing in nearly 135 countries. All disciplines eligible, incl. humanities, arts, social & physical sciences & journalism. Assignments range from 2 mos. to 1 yr. Multi-country research possible in many regions. Appls encouraged from ind. scholars & professionals outside academe. Deadline: August 1. For appl. or info., contact: Council for Int'l Exchange of Scholars, 3007 Tilden St. NW, Suite 5M, Box NEWS, Washington, DC 20008-3009; (202) 686-7877.

FULBRIGHT PROFESSIONAL FILM & TV FELLOWSHIP offers professional mediamakers an opportunity to pursue extended work in the UK in 1994-95. Minimum 3 yrs professional experience & US citizenship required. Applicants design program of creative work, combining professional & artistic work w/ contributions to community (e.g., workshops, lectures, etc.). Proposals of a purely academic nature ineligible. Awards £12,000 & travel expenses for 6-9 month stay. Deadline: August 1. For appl., contact: (202) 686-7878 & leave message. For info, contact: Dr. Karen Adams (202) 686-6245 or Ms. Jane Mangan (202) 686-6242 or write to UK Film & TV Fulbright Award, CIES, 3007 Tilden St., NW, Ste 5M, Box F-UKF, Washington, DC 20008-3009.

INDO-US SUBCOMMISSION on Education & Culture offers long-term (6-10 months) & short-term (2-3 months) awards for 1994-95 research in India. All disciplines, except clinical medicine, eligible. Applicants must be US citizens w/ Ph.D. or comparable professional qualifications. Those w/ limited or no prior experience in India especially encouraged to apply. Deadline: Aug. 1. For appl. or info., contact: Council for Int'l Exchange of Scholars, 3007 Tilden St., Suite 5M, Box INDO-NEWS, Washington, DC 20008-3009; (202) 686-4017.

INTER-MEDIA ARTS CENTER offers local graphic artists w/ experience in 3-D animation & 2-D graphics free access to equipment for participation in collaborative arts projects. Org. has 3/4" A/B/C/D roll computer, chroma-key, computer graphics & 3-D animation systems. Call Michael Rothbard, IMAC executive dir, (516) 549-9666.

JEROME FOUNDATION funds indiv. film & video artists living & working in NYC metro area. Appls. accepted any time, reviewed 3x/yr. Contact: Jerome Foundation, W. 1050 First National Bank Building, 332 Minnesota St., St. Paul, MN 55101; (612) 224-9431.

MEDIA CENTER FOR VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP (VSW) offers 1-month residencies for media artists living in US, designed to allow artists facilities & time to pursue their work. Access to facilities, living space & $1,000 honorarium provided. Artists chosen on basis of work sample & suitability of VSW's facilities. Students not eligible. Media artists can send proposals for creation of new audio work by submitting the following: current resumé; sample of finished work that demonstrates innovative use of audio; descriptive statement about work sample; description of residency project; & how facilities will be used in final presentation. Deadline: June 12. Contact: Artist-in-Residence Program, Visual Studies Workshop, 31 Prince St., Rochester, NY 14607; (716) 442-8676.

PROFESSIONAL DISCOUNTS FOR AIVF MEMBERS

The following is a list of companies that offer discounts to AIVF members. Call for more details: (212) 473-3400.

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Bill Creston
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(212) 678-2560 Contact: Bruce Follmer

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Mill Valley, CA 94941
(415) 381-9309 Contact: John Antonelli

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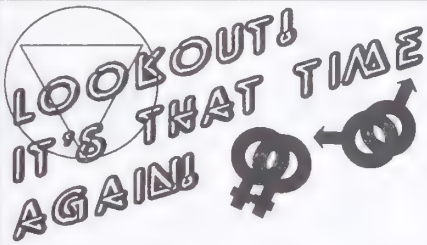
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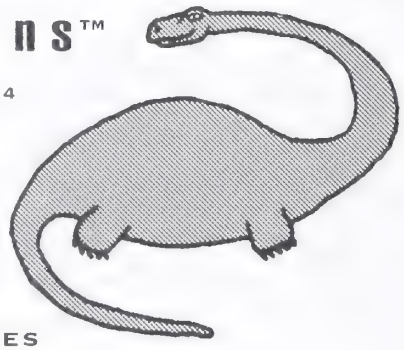
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NATIONAL LATINO COMMUNICATIONS CENTER provides funds to producers of Latino programs suitable for nat'l public TV broadcast. Grants are for all stages, research through postprod. & outreach. Contact: NLCC, 3171 Los Feliz Blvd, Ste 201, Los Angeles, CA 90039; (213) 663-8294, fax: 669-3456.

NEW YORK COUNCIL FOR THE HUMANITIES Media Projects—pioneering effort to bring together films on video, filmmakers & scholars in public forums throughout NYC—seeks proposals for programs. Events feature presentations at screening by filmmaker or scholar, framed by talk & discussion. $350 honorarium to filmmaker, $250 to scholar w/ up to $150 addt'l in travel expenses. For appl. contact: NYCH, 198 Broadway, 10th fl., New York, NY 10038; (212) 233-1131.

O.T.O.L. VIDEO invites producers to edit projects on video at its Southern CA facility. Submit synopsis of project, cover letter describing financing plan & brief description of principal people involved. Sample reel can be submitted. For more info, contact: O.T.O.L. Video, 1800 Stanford St., Santa Monica, CA 90404; (310) 828-5662.

PENNSYLVANIA HUMANITIES COUNCIL supports humanities projects throughout state. Strong PA connection required, either in subject matter or producer residence. Preliminary proposal drafts 6-8 weeks in advance of deadline recommended. Deadline: Oct. 1. For appl., contact: PHC, 320 Walnut St., Ste 305, Philadelphia, PA 19106-3892; (215) 925-1005.

PHILADELPHIA FILM & VIDEO ASSOCIATION (PIFVA) offers subsidy program to help complete ind. noncommercial films/videos/audio works by PIFVA members based in greater Philadelphia area. Grants paid directly to facilities for lab/facility services at discounted rates as negotiated by artist. Avg. grant: $500; max. $1,000. Deadline: June 15. For appl., contact: (215) 895-6594.

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UCROSS FOUNDATION offers artists 2- to 8-wk. residencies at foot of Big Horn Mts in Wyoming. Appls welcome from artists in all disciplines (visual, literary, film/video, music, scholarly). Deadlines: Oct. 1 for Jan.-May session; March 1 for August-December session. Room, board & studio space provided free of charge. For appl, contact: Executive director, Ucross Foundation, 2836 US Hwy 1416 East, Clearmont, Wyoming 82835; (307) 737-2291.

WESTERN STATES REGIONAL MEDIA ARTS FELLOWSHIPS award up to $7,000 for new works & works-in-progress by artists in AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NV, NM, OR, UT, WA, WY & Pacific Territories. Deadline: June 5. For info, contact Portland Art Museum Northwest Film Center (503) 221-1156.

The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers

When you join the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, you're doing something for yourself—and for others. Membership entitles you to a wide range of benefits. Plus, it connects you with a national network of independent producers. Adding your voice helps us all. The stronger AIVF is, the more we can act as advocate for the interests of independents like yourself—inside the corridors of Washington, with the press, and with others who affect our livelihoods.

18 Benefits of Membership

THE INDEPENDENT

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*. Published 10 times a year, the magazine is a vital source of information about the independent media field. Each issue helps you get down to business with festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and more. Plus, you'll find thought-provoking features, coverage of the field's news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters.

THE FESTIVAL BUREAU

AIVF maintains up-to-date information on over 650 national and international festivals, and can help you determine which are right for your film or video.

Liaison Service

AIVF works directly with many foreign festivals, in some cases collecting and shipping tapes or prints overseas, in other cases serving as the U.S. host to visiting festival directors who come to preview work.

Tape Library

Members can house copies of their work in the AIVF tape library for screening by visiting festival programmers. Or make your own special screening arrangements with AIVF.

INFORMATION SERVICES

Distribution

In person or over the phone, AIVF can provide information about distributors and the kinds of films, tapes, and markets in which they specialize.

AIVF's Member Library

Our library houses information on distributors, funders, and exhibitors, as well as sample contracts, funding applications, budgets, and other matters.

SEMINARS

Our seminars explore current business, aesthetic, legal, and technical topics, giving independent producers a valuable forum to discuss relevant issues.

BOOKS AND TAPES

AIVF has the largest mail order catalog of media books and audiotaped seminars in the U.S. Our list covers all aspects of film and video production. And we're constantly updating our titles, so independents everywhere have access to the latest media information. We also publish a growing list of our own titles, covering festivals, distribution, and foreign and domestic production resource guides.

continued

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ADVOCACY

Whether it's freedom of expression, public funding levels, public TV, contractual agreements, cable legislation, or other issues that affect independent producers, AIVF is there working for you.

INSURANCE

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A production insurance plan, tailor-made for AIVF members and covering public liability, faulty film and tape, equipment, sets, scenery, props, and extra expense, is available, as well as an errors and omissions policy with unbeatable rates.

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Equipment coverage for all of your equipment worldwide whether owned or leased.

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Reduced rates for dental coverage are available to NYC and Boston-area members.

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AIVF REGIONAL CORRESPONDENTS

AIVF has a network of regional correspondents who can provide membership information and aid recruitment in areas of the country outside New York. AIVF members are urged to contact them about AIVF-related needs and problems, your activities, and other relevant information and news:

Howard Aaron, Northwest Film and Video Ctr., 1219 S.W. Park Ave., Portland, OR 97205; (503) 221-1156

Cheryl Chisolm, 2844 Engle Road, NW, Atlanta, GA 30318; (404) 792-2167

Dee Davis, Appalshop, 306 Whitesburg, KY 41858; (606) 633-0108

Loni Ding, 2335 Jones St., San Francisco, CA 94133; (415) 474-5132; 673-6428

Dai Sil Kim-Gibson, 1752 17th St., NW, Washington, DC 20009; (202) 232-6912

Deanna Morse, School of Communication, Grand Valley State Univ., Allendale, MI 49401; (616) 895-3101

Robin Reidy, 911 Media Arts Center, 117 Vale Ave. N., Seattle, WA 98109; (206) 682-6552

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AIVF BOARD NOMINATIONS EXTENDED

Nominations for **AIVF** Board of Directors has been extended! You now have until **June 11** to nominate a fellow member (or yourself) to run for the **AIVF** board! Members outside of New York State are especially urged to submit names of potential nominees.

AIVF board members serve a two-year term and are expected to attend eight board meetings (four per year), which are held in New York. Board members are also expected to serve on at least one of the board committees.

Please note the following nomination procedures:

1) You must be a current member of AIVF.

2) The person you are nominating must also be a current member.

3) Write down the nominee's name, address, and phone number.

4) Your nomination must be seconded by another member in good standing. (Please include the name and phone number of the member who has seconded this nomination.)

5) Mail your nomination to our office: **AIVF**, 625 Broadway, NY, NY 10012. Attn: Stephanie Richardson or you may fax them to (212) 677-8732.

6) All nominees will be notified by June 18th with instructions for submitting election statements.

Hurry! Friday, June 11th will be here before you know it. Phone nominations will also be accepted. *Sorry*, student members are not eligible to serve on the board. Look for elections ballots in your mail

MOVING?

Please call and let us know. *The Independent* is sent out third-class bulk rate and *will not be forwarded* to your new address. Once we are notified of a change of address, it may still take up to four weeks to take effect. Back issues are not always available if you don't notify us of a change of address. So call in your new address. It's the easiest, fastest way to insure you'll receive your magazine and other important mailings. (212) 473-3400.

EASTMAN KODAK OFFERS AIVF MEMBERS DISCOUNT

Eastman Kodak is offering AIVF members a 15% discount on a special allocation of Eastman color negative film 5247, while supplies last. To arrange purchase of film at a discounted price, AIVF members should call Michael P. Brown, sales and engineering representative, Eastman Kodak's Motion Picture & TV Products Division at (212) 930-7614.

AIVF

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AIVF seeks four part-time interns for the fall semester. Each internship entails 10 hr/wk during work-week hours. Flexible schedule. Depending on school affiliation, work study and college credit an option. No production work involved.

Membership intern (1):
Responsibilities incl. upkeep of membership database; magazine circulation; assist w/ coordination of workshops & seminars; some phone work & clerical duties.

Administrative interns (2):
Work w/ information services, incl. upkeep of library area & files, direct contact w/ library patrons; heavy phone work, process book orders & clerical assistance.

Magazine intern (1):
Assist editorial assistant w/ proofreading, photo research, clerical work, indexing, and desktop magazine production. Must be detail-oriented & able to work on deadline.

Internships offer $100/month plus 2-yr subscription to *The Independent*, choice of 3 books & free admission to AIVF seminars & workshops. Send cover letter & resumé to: Membership director, Fall Internships, AIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., NY, NY 10012. No calls please.

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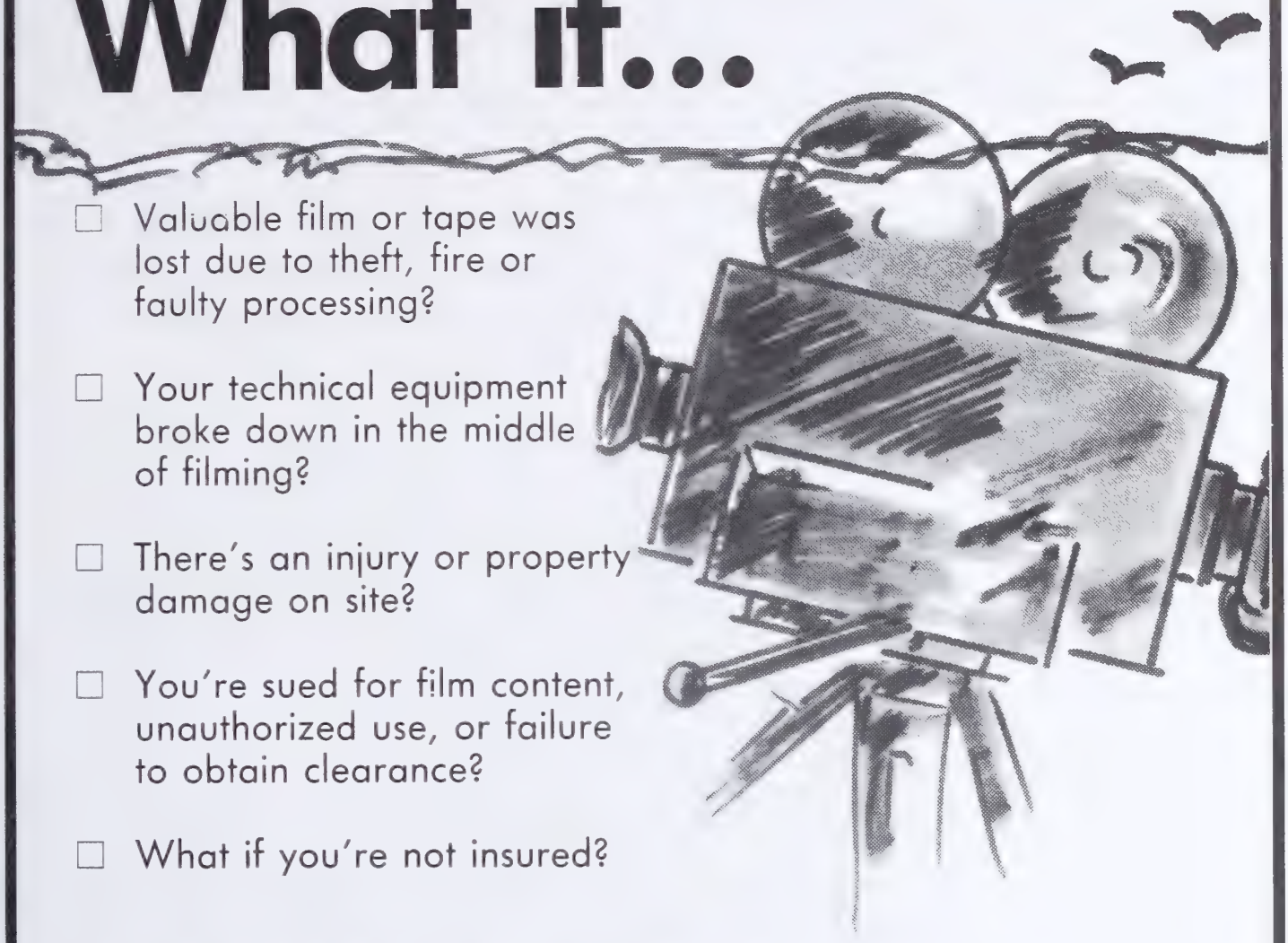
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The Independent seeks a part-time editorial assistant (10 hr/week). Responsibilities include proofreading, photo research, clerical work, and desktop magazine production. Also design & implement promotional materials to retailers and subscribers. Prior editorial experience a plus. Must be detail-oriented & able to work on deadline. Should have familiarity with field of independent media. Approx. $5,000/yr. Application deadline: June 18. Position begins early August. Send cover letter, resumé & names of 3 refs. to: Editorial Ass't Search, *The Independent*, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., NY, NY 10012. No calls please.

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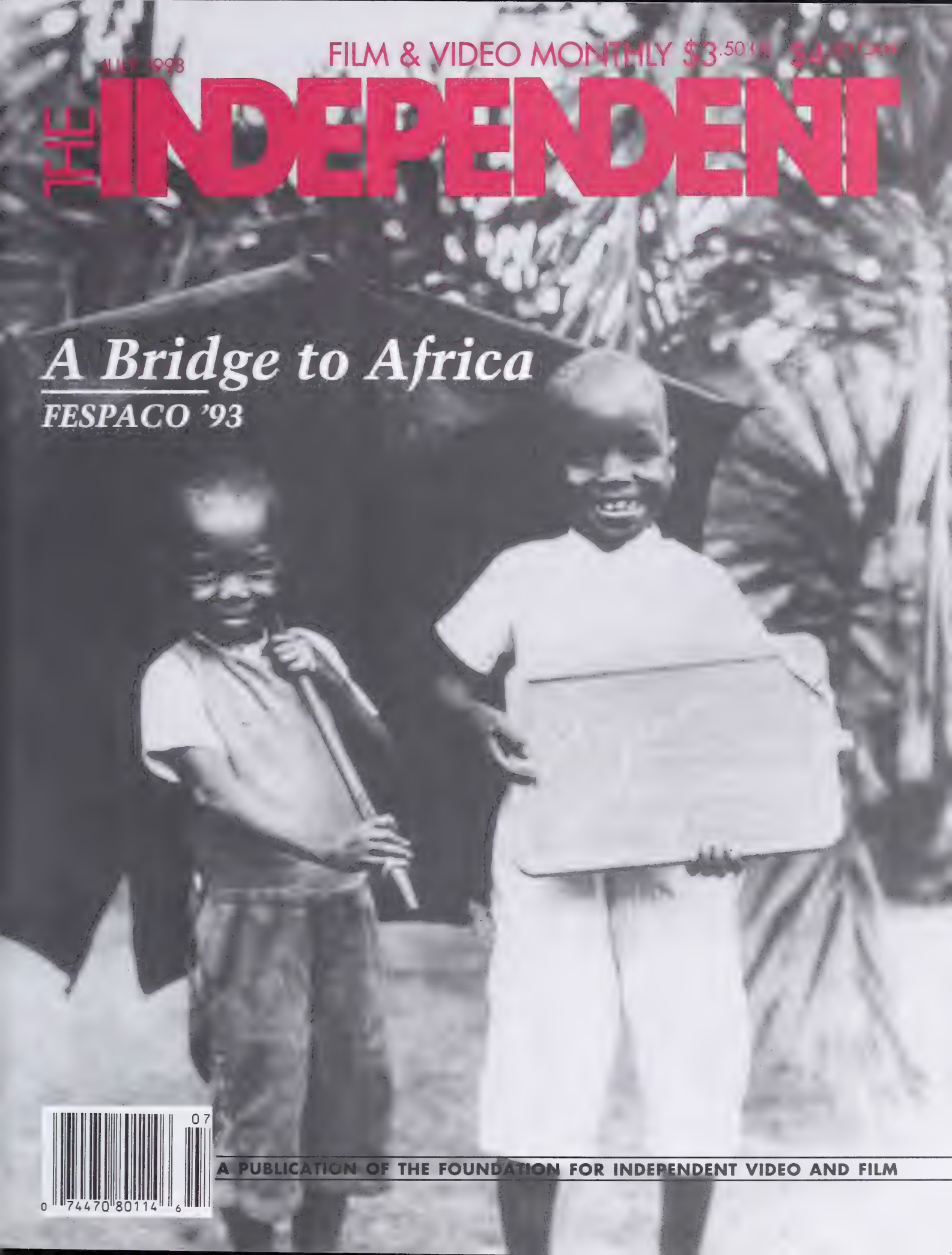
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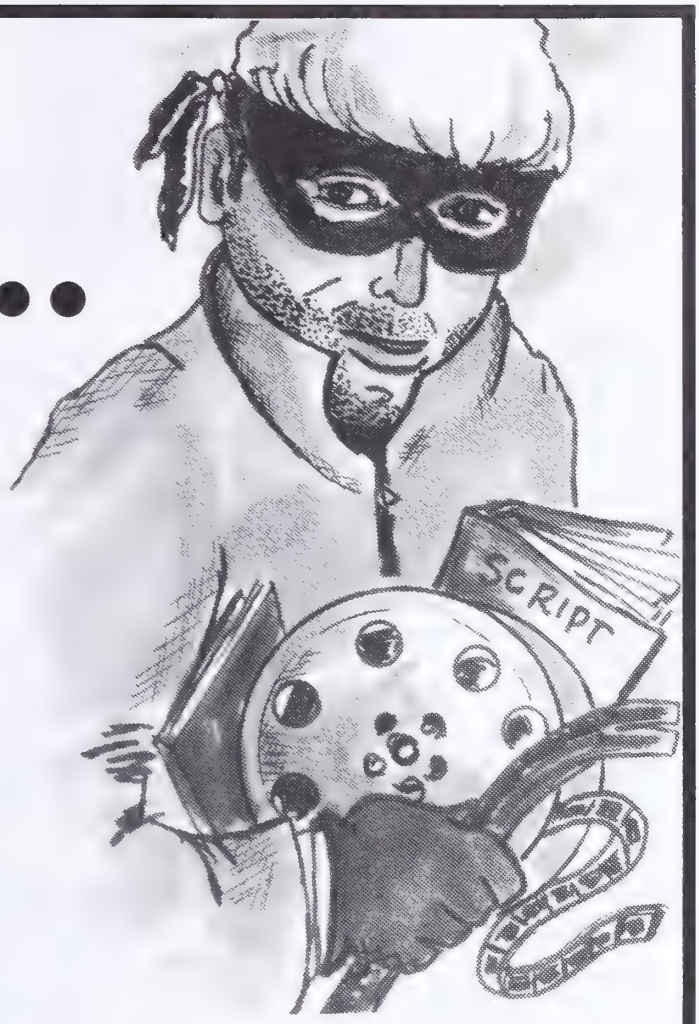


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LETTERS

LAWS OF GRAVITY BREAKS THE RULES

To the editor:

I don't know the people who made *Laws of Gravity*, or what their ultimate objectives were, and I am hardly a fan of violence in film. What I do know is this: *Laws of Gravity* is one of the few films I've seen where the violence actually had an impact, where you felt it in the gut as something entirely unglorified. The film is so relentless, gritty, and claustrophobic that I can't imagine how someone could read it as "formulaic" or "showy." [David Ehrenstein, "Not Ready for Crime Time," May 1993] And yet, after suggesting that the film revels in prurient violence, the fact that the film's critical act of violence takes place off camera is explained away by Ehrenstein as a "lapse of expressiveness."

Having lived for nine years in the working class neighborhood where the film takes place, it was quite clear to me that the filmmakers were doing exactly what Ehrenstein accuses them of avoiding—turning an eye towards a milieu that virtually nobody has any interest in. The charcters in *Laws of Gravity* are unglamorous, petty losers, real "mooks," to quote Scorsese. (They also serve as a timely reminder that street crime isn't an African American phenomena.)

Laws of Gravity doesn't need to wave any banners of Postmodern correctness; in its uncompromising descent into a reality that many would choose to ignore, it serves as a powerful critique of just the macho attitudes that Ehrenstein abhors. It also strikes me as odd that Ehrenstein completely ignores the amazing acting in the film, which includes some of the most complex female characterizations I've seen on screen. As for cinematography, I think that anyone who has ever held a camera would recognize the hand-held work in *Laws* as an astonishing achievement, as well as a perfectly appropriate means of getting by on an extremely low budget.

Like many critics of Hubert Selby's book *Last Exit to Brooklyn*, another work attacked and eventually censored for its violence, Ehrenstein confuses the means with the ends. Selby's book and *Laws of Gravity* are, in the end, justified in their violence by the compassion inherent in their unflinching observation and understanding.

Ironically, it is Scorsese, whose masterful work is revered by so many of us independents, who needs to seriously reconsider the gratuitous violence and commercialism evident in his last and lesser film, *Cape Fear*.

Jem Cohen
New York, New York

To the editor:

David Ehrenstein's cogent critique of the new maximum art thuggery, while blatantly biased towards Martin Scorsese, disappointingly ignores such notables as Hal Hartley. It's predictable that films such as *Gun Crazy*, *The Living End*, and *One False Move* are highlighted because of their criminal-minded obsessiveness, but why not a well-developed "uncrime" film such as *Simple Men*? Albeit not ultraviolent, films like Hartley's *Simple Men* prove that sub-genres within "crime flicks" exist without necessarily stroking either mainstream tastes or sexist, incendiary, and bigoted artful grapplings.

In fact, *Simple Men* often parallels Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs*. Tarantino opens his film by defoliating Madonna and her pop feminism; Hartley's palate hungers for the outspoken diatribes of Sonic Youth's neo-militant "Kool Thing." While Tarantino's scene is insidious and chock full of ambiguity, Hartley's is unabashedly purposeful in exploring the feminist psychology, later developed in the film's pivotal female figures. Also, each film ends with the enormous visceriality of "Don't fucking do it, man!" and "Don't move..." Though these terminal fragments are unmistakenly alike, Hartley fortunately does not rely on predecessors or icons like Scorsese to weave his particular cinematic insight.

Each film begins with a heist gone awry and concludes with the ineluctable presence of the cops while the final characters embrace (*Reservoir Dogs* in betrayal and violence, *Simple Men* in confiding vulnerability and trust). Though the events that ignited the storylines are similar, what lies between is completely different in manner and style. One can work within the crime genre and be poignant without trudging through the post-Scorsese mileau. Yes, Van Sant, Derek Jarman, and others have refused to listen, just like Scorsese. But so has Hartley, often without the same limelight.

David Ensminger and Jim Fetterly
Rockford, Illinois

LONDON CALLING

To the editor:

It was good to read Ellin Stein's report of the 1992 London Film Festival ["London Kills Me:The London Film Festival," April 1993].

However one important factor that was not covered is the possibility of theatrical sales. To mention just a couple of examples, *Straight Out of Brooklyn* and *Johnny Suede* were both bought for distribution from the LFF, and British distributors are actively seeking new titles each year. We also accredit some 500+ international press, industry delegates (including theatrical and TV buyers) ,and festival directors/programmers. And don't forget that Scott Meek of Zenith saw Hal Hartley's *The Unbelievable Truth* at the LFF and the rest, as they say, is history.

Just two small points of fact: we screen 180 features (not 20), and it is *Brian* Baxter of the BBC, not Ryan.

In the meantime we intend to go on promoting US indies as best we can.

Sheila Whitaker
director, London Film Festival

THE INDEPENDENT

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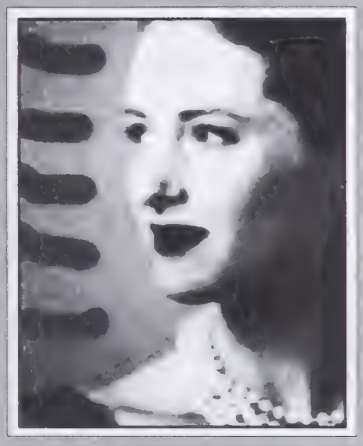
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COVER: Cameroonian director Jean Marie Teno's documentary *Afrique Je Te Plumerais* (*I Will Fleece You, Africa*), a look at how books and the written word were once used as a tool of colonial domination and now help advance a people's freedom, was one of 200 films screened at FESPACO, the Panafrican film festival. In this issue, Cheryl Fabio-Bradford, who attended the festival as an official representative of the African diaspora, creates a portrait of the city, the films, and the effort to establish regional representation for diaspora artists. Cover photo courtesy Film Society of Lincoln Center.

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FIRST AMENDMENT ADVOCATES VS. THE FCC

Lawsuit Challenges New Restrictions on Cable Access

A lawsuit filed recently against the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) by a coalition of First Amendment advocates and cable access supporters challenges a new cable television law's provision that allows cable operators to censor the content of cable access channels, which they previously could not control. Although the FCC is not yet enforcing the law, doing so in the future could have severe implications for independent film- and videomakers' freedom of expression.

Regarding leased-access channels, Section 10 of the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992 gives cable operators a choice: either prohibit "indecent" programming or funnel it to a scrambled-signal channel that can be seen only when an individual viewer sends a written request to the operator.

As for public, educational, and government (PEG) channels, cable operators won't be able to scramble signals, but they will be able to censor both "indecent" programs and any programming that solicits or promotes "unlawful conduct"; this last point is targeted to advertisements for escort services. But it could potentially be used by cable operators against programs that deal with AIDS and safe sex, gay rights, sexual harassment, and art programming that might include sexually explicit material. Provisions of Section 10 were introduced in Congress by Senators Jesse Helms (R-NC) and Wyche Fowler (R-GA).

On April 7, 1993, the U.S. Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C., stopped the FCC from enforcing Section 10 until arguments are heard for the leased-access case this fall. To be granted a stay, the petitioners had to prove that either they had a good likelihood of winning the case or that they would experience irreparable injury if the rules were enacted. "If your constitutional rights are infringed, I think that's bound to be irreparable injury," says Jonathan Schwartz, president of The 90's Channel, a Colorado-based leased-access programmer and co-petitioner in the lawsuits.

Allowing cable operators to censor these channels could prove detrimental for independent film- and videomakers. "To have our cable operator decide something we did was indecent, when we don't trust them as the judge—and when they may very well be looking for some excuse to take us off the air—is an untenable situation," says Schwartz. "That's why we felt we had to go to court." Relying exclusively on independent video producers for its political features and documentaries, The 90's Channel has covered gay rights, AIDS, abortion, and women's issues, among other topics. The channel's cable operator, Tele-Communications, Inc. (TCI), has tried more than once to invalidate its lease on technical grounds, and has told the FCC it plans to censor indecency on the channel if Section 10 is enacted.

Scheduled to be heard in September, the leased-access lawsuit that The 90's Channel is participating in is consolidated from two separate lawsuits filed in February 1993 with the U.S. Court of Appeals. Two similar lawsuits regarding PEG channels were filed in April 1993. PEG lawsuit petitioners applied to consolidate with each other, as well as with the leased-access case and on May 7 the motion was granted. Co-petitioners in the lawsuit now include the American Civil Liberties Union, People for the American Way, Alliance for Community Media, and Alliance for Communications Democracy.

The FCC's definition of "indecency" has always been hazy, and Schwartz fears his channel and others may experience a chilling effect, never knowing exactly what programming will or will not offend censors. Charles Sims, a New York attorney representing The 90's Channel and the ACLU, says, "The channel puts out an enormous amount of what is, by anybody's judgment, protected material. I think the court is going to feel cautious about throwing out the baby with the bathwater."

Because the FCC does not license cable channels, it argues that Section 10 merely allows for private, legal censorship. "We don't even tell cable operators that they *must* exclude indecent programming," says Gregory Christopher, appellate attorney for the FCC. "We say they *may*, if they choose. Therefore, there is no governmental compulsion here."

But Sims argues that Section 10 clearly treads on the First Amendment's turf. "If we passed a statute that said to the printers of the world, 'You can censor what's in the *New York Times* that you print every day,' the notion that it is not a state action would be laughed out of court," he says.

The best news so far for independent mediamakers may be the judges chosen to hear the case: all three are Carter appointees. Sims describes them as "probably the three strongest First Amendment voices on that court."

ROBERT KOLKER

Robert Kolker is a freelance writer living in Manhattan.

"We don't tell cable operators that they *must* exclude indecent programming," says Gregory Christopher, appellate attorney for the FCC. "We say they *may*, if they choose."

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BRAVO FOR FINE LINE THEATRE

Beginning in September, supporters of independent cinema can turn to cable television for a new series featuring some of their favorite films. A distribution agreement between New Line Television and the Bravo cable network has resulted in *Fine Line Theatre*, a monthly showcase of movies produced by New Line Cinema's specialty film division, Fine Line Features, and hosted by Fine Line president, Ira Deutchman.



Spalding Gray's *Monster in a Box* is one of many independent features included in *Fine Line Theatre*, a new series on the Bravo Network.

Photo: Paula Court, courtesy Fine Line Features

After announcing the new program last March, Joshua Sapan, president of Bravo, and Robert Friedman, president of New Line Television, expressed the hope that their partnership will stimulate production, distribution, and promotion of independent films by increasing demand for them. Friedman says, however, that at this time there are no plans to change the number of projects Fine Line develops or the way in which the projects are selected. He calls the unconventional agreement "an example of the best kind of partnership you can find." New Line, which formed Fine Line Features in 1990 to distribute high-quality independent productions, will get a reliable commitment for the purchasing of its product, while Bravo, with approximately 10-million subscribers nationwide, is assured a steady source of movies in an area where there are few high-quality suppliers.

Films chosen for the series already may have been in theatrical release or seen on other television venues, including the major networks. New Line Cinema's *The Player*, for example, will appear on the Fox network, but may later find its

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way to the *Fine Line Theatre* lineup. Movies currently scheduled for the 1993-94 season include Gus Van Sant's *My Own Private Idaho*, Jane Campion's *An Angel at My Table*, Spalding Gray's *Monster in a Box*, Jim Jarmusch's *Night on Earth*, Stephen Gyllenhaall's *Waterland*, and Joe Vasquez's *Hangin' with the Homeboys*.

As host, Deutchman will present an insider's look at the making of independent films by conducting interviews with writers, directors, and actors. Viewers will also be informed about current Fine Line theatrical releases.

Independent producer Stan Wlodkowski (*Longtime Companion*, *Zebrahead*, and the soon-to-be-released *Golden Gate*, directed by John Madden) agrees that, "any program that increases the awareness of independent films in the mainstream is good for their production in general." He is skeptical, however, that the agreement will increase independent production because, he notes, "most independent films find their way to cable eventually and therefore no new market has been created."

Bravo, which bills itself as "television's only network devoted to American independent films," already airs *The Independents*, which showcases on Monday nights independent productions made in this country. The popularity of the series with viewers may have been an impetus for the cable network's deal with Fine Line. Friedman concludes that there has been a resurgence of interest in American independent filmmaking in recent months and he hopes that *Fine Line Theatre* will tap into this interest.

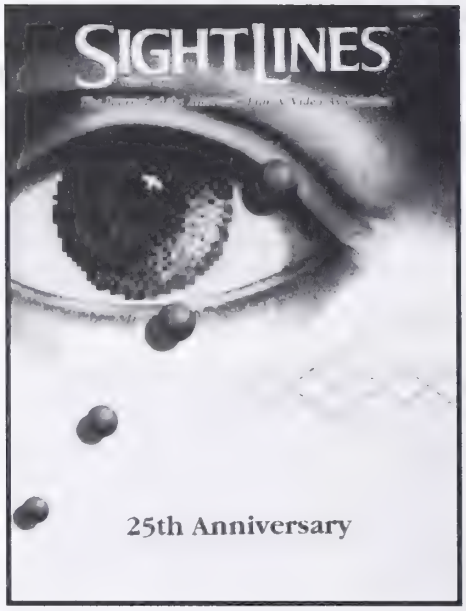
DOROTHY ROMPALSKE

Dorothy Rompalske is a writer/filmmaker living in New York City.

AFVA CANCELS FESTIVAL, RETHINKS STRUCTURE

During the year of its 50th anniversary, the American Film and Video Association (AFVA) came dangerously close to folding due to a lack of funding. The organization's annual film festival, which received more than 1,000 entries this year, was scheduled for May 26-30, but was cancelled in mid-April because of a lack of sufficient registrations. At the same time, four full-time staffers at the Niles, Illinois-based organization were let go, including the editor of AFVA's bimonthly publication, *Sightlines*.

Several factors, ranging from decreased funding to a drop in membership renewals, led to the organization's virtual shutdown. John Rowe, an AFVA board member, says the primary reason for this year's festival cancellation was the inability of AFVA's members—who include public, special, and museum librarians, regional school district media faculty, distributors, and independent filmmakers—to cough up the cash. "Travel budgets have been cut tremendously," he says. "The costs of airfare and hotel are prohibitive and I understand why they couldn't attend." Still, the



In another sign of rocky times for arts organizations, AFVA laid off its staff and editor of its magazine, *Sightlines*, this spring.

35-year-old festival, which has been held in Chicago, San Francisco, and Philadelphia in recent years, was a key market for distributors in search of educational product.

Although AFVA's 14-member board voted unanimously to cancel the festival, Rowe, formerly of the New York-based Filmmaker's Library, now devotes most of his time to keeping AFVA, which began as a library-run vehicle and eventually expanded to include university and school libraries, alive.

As acting executive director, Rowe runs the organization out of his New Jersey apartment and says he feels strongly that AFVA has a future. "We need to support material for independent producers of educational films. I want to teach branch librarians the importance of non-Hollywood materials," he says, adding that "The reviews of works we offer in *Sightlines* are even more important now that several publications containing reviews of educational films have folded."

As for funding, Rowe says distributors are supporting the organization with ads for a special edition of *Sightlines* (which Rowe will edit) that announces award recipients from this year's festival entries. He also is looking for support from the National Educational Film and Video Festival, a weeklong event that includes its own market and seminars and was held in Oakland this year, and hopes to combine AFVA's festival with other organizations' events. But, he admits, "this isn't a moneymaking proposition by any means."

Rowe stresses the importance of shifting the organization's focus to include new technologies such as satellite delivery. Irene Wood, former AFVA board member and editor of *Booklist*, agrees. "I have seen the industry change so much in the last 10 years. For example, video is more readily accessible. We need to recognize those

changes."

Other changes Rowe hopes to make include hiring an assistant, updating *Sightlines* to include more reviews, and offering discount library subscriptions.

NICOLE GONZALES AND MICHELE SHAPIRO

Nicole Gonzales is a student intern at the Museum of Modern Art's film department in New York.

QUEER PICKS FOR TOP 10 FILMS

Frameline, a distributor of gay and lesbian films,surveyed 250 men and 200 women about their 10 favorite films of all time. According to the 210 completed surveys (70 percent men, 30 percent women), the following films are tops among lesbian and gay film- and videomakers, curators, and critics:

1. *Vertigo* (Alfred Hitchcock, 1958)
2. *Sunset Boulevard* (Billy Wilder, 1950)
3. *The Times of Harvery Milk* (Robert Epstein, 1984)
4. *La Dolce Vita* (Federico Fellini, 1960)
5. *Jeanne Dielman* (Chantal Ackerman, 1975)
6. *Citizen Kane* (Orson Welles, 1941)
7. *Imitation of Life* (Douglas Sirk, 1959)
8. *The Wizard of Oz* (Victor Fleming, 1939)
9. *Thelma and Louise* (Ridley Scott, 1991)
10. *Law of Desire* (Pedro Almodovar, 1987)

ERRATA

Due to an error in editing, the article "Native American Producers Form Alliance" [May 1993] contained some inaccuracies. Robin Cutler Maw's series *Indian America* is not being produced solely by teams of Native American professionals, as the article implies. Both Indian and non-Indian media professionals are and will be collaborating on research, scripting, and production.

Secondly, the entire series is not about the Makah, only the first segment. Others will reflect upon the histories and cultures of Native American communities from across the U.S. *The Independent* regrets these errors.

✣ ✣ ✣

In "A Berlin Studio with Money and Talent to Spare" [May 1993], the phone and fax for Studios Babelsberg were incorrect. The correct numbers are: tel: 331-965-2006/05 or, in Berlin, 30-2536-2006/05; fax: 331-965-2053/2010.

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CODIRECTORS

The Sluts and Goddesses VideoWorkshop

"We have a gorgeous box," exclaims Annie Sprinkle, codirector of the videotape entitled *The Sluts and Goddesses Video Workshop or How To Be a Sex Goddess in 101 Easy Steps*. "Our tape is slick, so our box is slick," continues codirector Maria Beatty. "Packaging has a lot to do with [the tape's success]," they agree.

This sometimes funny, always lavishly produced, 52-minute video promises to help viewers "explore the ancient and forbidden knowledge about female sexuality." Sprinkle, a former porn star turned performance artist, is joined by a half dozen "Transformation Facilitators" to guide the dutiful viewer through accessorized pleasure, Tantric breathing, striptease, Chinese sword dancing, and group masturbation to find her (or possibly his) true release. While it is predictably chock full of moans and groans, the video also borrows from (and campily spoofs) the conventions of how-to tapes and exercise videos as it aims to educate viewers in the process of transforming them into Sex Goddesses.

But it's the box—complete with a color portrait of the laden Sprinkle as a seven-armed sex goddess, as well as 16 titillating stills—that attracts browsers in both video stores and sex shops. The cover art, the advertising, and the title have all played a big role in a particularly effective distribution strategy for this uncategorizable but extremely straightforward videotape.

Funded for approximately $15,000 out of Beatty and Sprinkle's pockets (plus a lot of favors), the video, completed in 1992, is now circulating at the speed of light, with sales reaching 2,500 in the past year. After virtually all the major alternative film and video distributors in the U.S. rejected *Sluts and Goddesses*, the directing duo sought other venues for their boundary-pushing piece. Things took off last year when almost every gay and lesbian and women's film and video festival across the country screened it. Since then, mail orders continue coming in because of articles in magazines like *On Our Backs*, *Screw*, *Bad Attitude*, *Playgirl*, *Libido*, *Tantra*, and *Piercing Fans International Quarterly*. Sprinkle also does performances and classes nationwide and sells the perfectly packaged tape at these events.



Annie Sprinkle in cover art for *Sluts and Goddesses*

Photo Amy Ardrey, courtesy videomakers

It has been picked up by a number of distributors, including Wolfe Video in San Jose, which focuses on women's media; the VHS video art distributor ArtCom in San Francisco; London Video Access; and Facets Multimedia in Chicago, which sells VHS copies to home video stores all over the country. It's currently being translated into French and Spanish. With its experimental editing and high tech style, the tape is scheduled to show this fall at the Whitney Museum and is booked at a Montreal theater for an entire month, sandwiched in between films by Spike Lee and John Cassavetes.

The marketing of the graphic and educational *Sluts and Goddesses* presents an interesting challenge to both the art world and the porn biz, since it falls into neither camp comfortably. As a sex tape, it turns off the usual smut audience of lecherous old men, says Sprinkle, and brings in streams of fan mail from "hot sexy young women." Beatty and Sprinkle can't even agree among themselves about whether or not this is actually "pornography." Sprinkle insists it's "Post-Porn Modernism," while Beatty muses, "Fist fucking is considered pornographic, although maybe not in this context." Sprinkle chimes in, "To me, licking someone's ass and calling it 'Flying Butterfly Blossom' is more like sex on an intellectual, spiritual level. Porn is animalistic." As if to resolve the conflict, they add that every porn distributor in both the United States and Canada rejected it.

Instead *Sluts and Goddesses* sells at women's sex shops like Eve's Garden in New York City and Good Vibrations in San Francisco. According to Sprinkle, the hetero world just doesn't seem to get it. "They think the women are ugly, it's not sexy, the music is horrible. It's too real, too primal. They said, 'We wish women would go back to faking orgasm.'"

Sprinkle says she enjoys more freedom making art than porn. "You can only have sex movies without bondage or S&M movies without sex; they can't be mixed," she says. "But in art, I can do anything I want."

All profits from *Sluts and Goddesses* are now being funnelled into a 90-minute documentary called *Orgasm Scrapbook*, featuring 50 "experts"

ranging from a dominatrix and midwife to a transsexual and a Tantric teacher. To be sure, one box or another guarantees big sales.

CATHERINE SAALFIELD

Catherine Saalfield, an AIDS educator and film/videomaker, most recently collaborated on Sacred Lies, Civil Truths, *an organizing video to help lesbians and gays fight the "Religious" Right.*

Lindsay Law

P R E S I D E N T

American Playhouse

Lindsay Law is quick to fire off letters to newspapers whose critics generalize about "American Playhouse-type productions." The appellation has haunted American Playhouse ever since it began producing feature films for public television and, more recently, theatrical release. Executive producer since the organization's start-up in 1982 and president as well since May 1 (replacing retiree David Davis), Law sees red when the label is used pejoratively—in the same way *Masterpiece Theater* has become a negative barometer of a staid and languorous television cum stage aesthetic. "I'm attracted to an eclectic mix of work, which is why when someone suddenly says they can type what we're doing..." Law trails off.



Courtesy American Playhouse

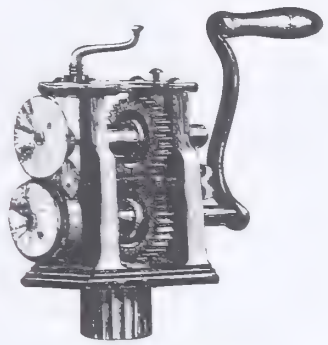
"Granted, the one similarity in these projects becomes me in a way," says Law, "but I do not influence them in such a way that they have my individual stamp, because they don't. My role in them is choosing the projects and then playing along with the creators for the whole route, casting them, being present while they're being shot, whatever."

The moniker American Playhouse, originally just Playhouse ("Some at PBS thought, Oh, we're going to do theater!"), is, according to Law, "a throwback to *Philco Playhouse*, *CBS Playhouse*, *Playhouse 90*, which were not specifically theater at all—they were dramas created for television." (Law and his coworkers tossed around the name Playhouse Pictures "ever so briefly" about a year and a half ago.)

Perhaps some of his sensitivity to criticism is based on his own background. "The kind of films I get involved in has very much to do with the fact that I come out of the theater," he says. "And although I'll sometimes make choices that don't come out of that at all—*Sidewalk Stories* or *Swoon*—what guides me on a large number of our projects is that if I'm going to go with a first-time director or writer, I prefer to go with a first-time director who came out of the theater rather than a first-time director who just came out of film school. The element most overlooked is the contribution of the actor. That's the animal that the film student has no idea what to do with... And I'd rather work with playwrights than screenwriters. This is all anathema to say."

The 44-year-old Law is exceptionally open, articulate, affable, and—well—dramatic. He shifts around restlessly in his chair, talking rapidly and with little self-censorship. ("It gets me in trouble sometimes.") A Connecticut resident and native, he is a Yankee yenta in argyles and sweater vest, sprinkling his conversation with lots of "gee"s. After dropping out of New York University, he began working in the theater and left New York in 1977 to produce theatrical TV pieces for Warner Brothers in Los Angeles. WNET offered him the opportunity to produce TV dramas, so he returned to New York. The project eventually evolved into American Playhouse.

According to its press materials, American Playhouse functions "to encourage the creation of programming for public television that explores the human experience within the American experience," presenting "an eclectic combination of American history, biography, literature, drama,



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and comedy, which reflects the vast range of the nation's concerns and issues." His own criteria for greenlighting productions? "I have to balance the needs of public broadcasting—they want a variety of excellent drama that will get audiences to watch, and they would like to serve all audiences." (The most underserved group at this moment, he says, is lesbians.) "Within that, it's like putting together a season, in terms of putting together a variety of projects."

Law meets with numerous writers and directors. "This whole idea of pitching—I don't respond to that at all." He is interested in "exploring subject matter, not story. You know, 'What's on your mind?' 'This whole city is going to burn down soon, and I want to explore the roots of this violence.' That's all I need to hear."

So much for art. What about commerce? "The financial structure of our projects has to make as much sense as the creative structure at this point, because it is extremely important to the health of this company that money continue to come back to us." It takes $18-23 million to produce nine annual "events"—features and made-for-television programs combined. Cutbacks and the need for fresh sources of revenue have resulted in a 50 percent decrease in the number of "events" per year. But the number of features created specifically for theatrical release has jumped—from two out of 18 to the current average of six or seven out of nine. (All of the theatrical releases eventually appear on the TV series.)

"We had a huge cut from PBS... The feature films have always had a larger audience than the original made-for-TV programs, so we decided to reverse [the proportion]." This broader audience and the revenues generated help justify their continued public funding. Public television remains the largest supporter, giving about $6.5 million a year. The National Endowment for the Arts grants about $500,000, and the corporate sponsor, the Chubb Insurance Company, puts in a little more than $1 million. They also received a one-time-only three-to-one challenge grant of $1 million from the NEA, and foundations like the MacArthur, Rockefeller, and Irene Diamond have assisted in the match.

The movement now is away from government funding toward more private gifts and investments. New American Playhouse chair/CEO Ward Chamberlin is, according to Law, well-equipped to pursue wealthy donors. ("Philanthropy for film is a very new idea," says Law. "Philanthropy for public television has a whole history. We're looking here for philanthropy for feature films.") Law refuses to discuss *Variety*'s report that American Playhouse might attempt a public stock offering.

American Playhouse is trying to put more of the financial packaging for film projects together themselves. "I still prefer to make movies without the attachment of distributors," Law says, "although quite often that's the only way I get them made, by having them involved up front." The time is right to entice investors for "non-mainstream, non-Hollywood" films, Law claims, "because of the huge success of *Enchanted April*, *The Crying Game*, and *The Player*...These are all kind of nontraditional." All but two American Playhouse projects—*Longtime Companion* and *Ethan Frome*—have been coproductions. They opened a European office three years ago in Berlin, managed by Sandra Schulberg. "It became more and more difficult to find money here," he says. "There aren't that many like-minded people."

Law is happy with his job: "I'll continue doing this, or I won't be working in film." Maybe that's why he takes criticism of American Playhouse so personally. Does he see himself as the producer analog to director Jon Jost, a notorious media kvetch? "No. I'm not a complainer. We made *All the Vermeers in New York* to hush Jost up." Law laughs. "He was after us for years."

HOWARD FEINSTEIN

Howard Feinstein is a freelance film journalist living in New York.

Marco Müller

FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

Locarno International Film Festival

Marco Müller looks harried. In the few months since February's Berlin International Film Festival, he has generated more frequent flyer miles than most travellers do in a lifetime.

The Italian-born Müller has literally circled the globe in search of innovative international premieres for this year's Locarno International Film Festival (August 5-15). Flying from Europe and Russia to Hong Kong and Africa, Müller has screened an exhausting number of feature-length fiction films by new directors (500 at the Hong Kong International Film Festival alone) and has sought out what he refers to as "young film movements deserving of international attention." On a brief visit to New York in April, he is tired, pallid. And rightfully so. But he is also pleased with the films he has screened so far.

"Last year at this time, I had seen a few I liked," Müller, 40, says in perfect English. It is one of six languages he speaks fluently, along with Italian, French, German, Portuguese, Spanish, and Chinese. "But this year I saw a lot more."

His bearded, bespectacled face regains its color as he describes some of the five films he has selected to date for this year's competition, as well as two out-of-competition works. He calls Zhang Yuan's *Beijing Bastards* "a Chinese rock film about spiritual misery" and describes Ivory Coast director Roger Gnoan M'Bala's film, *In the Name of Christ*, which he discovered at the FESPACO,

as "a satire of religious fundamentalism." Since the festival's cap on competition films is 20, Müller still has miles to go before he rests. But he is determined to make the festival's competition section as compelling as its main attraction: the outdoor screening facility set up in the Piazza Grande every night where crowds of close to 7,000 gather to watch out-of-competition films.

Several critics have denounced Locarno's insistence on premieres because the 46-year-old festival, a giant among small fests but a sprout among the biggies, often ends up settling for mediocre films. Yet Müller says that premieres are a necessity "to keep the press and media interested." Last year, the festival's Golden Leopard winner, Clara Law's *Autumn Moon*, was well-received, but the Silver and Bronze winners, Darezhahn Omirbaev's *Kairat* and Philip Gröning's *Die Terroristen!*, were far from crowd-pleasers. The announcement that the German *Die Terroristen!*, a documentary-like political thriller, had been awarded the Bronze Leopard was met with boos.



Photo: Hélène Caux

As director of what he boasts is the only "multilingual, multicultural festival" at which the official language is French (although it takes place in an Italian city), Müller is no stranger to the festival circuit. After earning degrees in Sinology, Anthropology, and Chinese Literature, Müller lived in China during the late sixties and early seventies. He directed and wrote numerous television documentaries about film and filmmakers before becoming involved in the Pesaro Festival, which he directed from 1986 to 1989. While at Pesaro, he organized the first retrospective outside of Asia of contemporary Chinese cinema.

During Müller's two-year stint as director of the Rotterdam Festival from 1990 to 1991, the CineMart at Rotterdam shifted its role from a traditional market to a forum for coproduction deals. "The coproduction workshops were meant to bring together buyers for scripts at the scriptwriting stage," Müller says. Two years ago he took over for David Streiff as the director of Locarno. In his first year, he created a fund, supported by government money, to be used for coproduction and marketing purposes. "My main aim for Locarno is to run a festival that does something for producers before, during, and after the event," he adds.

Although Locarno has no official market, Müller says that last year 10 or 11 of the festival's films were sold to five or so territories because of the support that the fund provided for the films. As the market for European independents continues to shrink ("Paris and London, two major European markets, are looking more and more to mainstream films," he observes) and the release calendar for smaller, low-budget films becomes more limited ("Art films are exhibited starting in late July; after October 15, the market is overshadowed by Hollywood blockbusters"), Müller finds himself fighting harder than ever to defend independent films. And his scope is not limited to European independents.

His relationship with U.S. independents dates back to Pesaro, where he organized an exhibition of the American avant garde, and to Rotterdam, where the number of U.S. independents was far greater than it had been previously. "If we want to defend independent cinema, we will also want American independent films more widely shown," he says. This year, Müller was impressed with Sarah Driver's *When Pigs Fly*, which he feels will attract different types of audiences because of its strange blend of music, comedy, and horror. Last year, Müller selected Anthony Drazan's *Zebrahead* for competition, but lost Quentin Tarantino's *Reservoir Dogs* to Cannes and Alexandre Rockwell's *In the Soup* to the Venice International Film Festival.

Locarno and Venice, held back-to-back, are often in competition for films. Müller, who for 11 years selected films for the Venice festival, says

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that the "gentleman's agreement" he had with Venice director Gillo Pontecorvo was short-lived. Last July, Müller accused Venice of wait-listing Italian films so that, if rejected, they were too late for inclusion in Locarno. In a *La Republica* article, Pontecorvo responded directly to Müller's accusation, saying, "I understand your disappointment, but it's not my fault if this year Venice has become very fashionable again." Although Pontecorvo may have had the last word in the press, Müller says he had the last laugh because, of the 12 Italian films screened at Venice last year, only one was successful at the box office.

Müller can attest that the life of a festival director is as worthwhile as it is exhausting. For all the thousands of bad films he screens each year, there are a few gems that make him feel his time is well spent. When asked what he looks for in films, Müller's response is automatic. "I don't like self-sufficient films," he says. "I prefer films that raise issues and need the presence of the viewer to supply answers." Supporters of the Locarno Festival hope Müller, with his understanding of aesthetics and his business acumen, will supply whatever answers are required to position the festival alongside other major players in the circuit.

MICHELE SHAPIRO

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of The Independent.

AIVF REGIONAL CORRESPONDENTS

AIVF has a network of regional correspondents who can provide membership information and aid recruitment in areas of the country outside New York. AIVF members are urged to contact them about AIVF-related needs and problems, your activities, and other relevant information and news:

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Bart Weiss, 1611 Rio Vista Dr., Dallas, TX 75208; (214) 948-7300

NORTHEASTERN EXPOSURE

Film Archive Exhibits New England's History

ROB EDELMAN

In a corner of the busy office of Northeast Historic Film, an archive based in Bucksport, Maine, a framed Statement of Purpose rests against a window overlooking the company's hanging street sign. The statement is only 8x10 inches, but its size in no way obscures the importance of its meaning. "The purpose of Northeast Historic Film," the statement begins, "is to preserve, and make available to the public, film/videotape of the northern New England region."

The emphasis here is "make available to the public." While many archives are content to collect and preserve film, an equal part of this organization's mission is to make moving images accessible to the people of Maine, New Hampshire, and Vermont; rural states, where there are neither concentrations of population nor cinematheques.

"We set out to be an archive that served its audience," explains Karan Sheldon, project director of Northeast Historic Film who, with her husband, David Weiss, is the organization's cofounder. "Personally, bringing the films to the public is why I do what I do. I feel very strongly that film in a can isn't doing anybody any good.

"Partly, I feel this way because we are in a region where there has not been a lot of film scholarship, or concentration from the communications community on the meaning of the material. So we are completely audience-driven. We couldn't exist unless we really brought what we are discovering to people." Adds David Weiss, the organization's executive director, "The more people see the value of these types of images, the more likely they will be to understand the need for preservation. When they find an old box in the attic, they might realize that it could be significant. They won't be so quick to discard it."

Sheldon and Weiss are expatriates of Boston, where she worked for WGBH and on the documentary series *Vietnam: A Television History*, and he produced 16mm and multimedia presenta-



Northeast Historic Film not only preserves regional films, but takes them on the road, often with live piano accompaniment, as well as lectures, discussions, and oral history activities.

Photo: Roy Zalesky, *The Ellsworth American*; courtesy Northeast Historic Film

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David Weiss and Karan Sheldon cofounded the Northeast Historic Film to bring indigenous film history back to its community roots in halls and libraries throughout northern New England.

Photo: Thomas R Stewart, courtesy Northeast Historic Film

tions for business and nonprofit organizations. "After we came to Maine," explains Sheldon, "we did freelance work. One of our jobs had to do with the preservation of a 16mm amateur film, which we received from the University of Maine. Somebody from the history department had turned up a couple of cans of film. No one knew what it was. I looked at it, saw the original typescript, and thought it was very interesting."

The film, a 1930 production called *From Stump to Ship*, is a look at the logging and lumbering industries in Maine. "It was made in the last year of business of an independent landowner," Sheldon says. "He had filmed all the phases of his business, through the four seasons. Then he had written a script explaining what he was showing and why; this narration was only a typescript, which we had recorded. Putting these two artifacts—the images and his text—together was gratifying because of how important this story is to the people of Maine."

Sheldon and Weiss first planned a seven-site tour of *From Stump to Ship*, but it eventually was expanded to 22 sites—and ended up taking over their lives. "We went around the state showing it in grange [community] halls and libraries," recalls Sheldon. "Usually, the hall would be filled to capacity, and we would have to do two shows. And people would come up to us and say, 'You know, my father or grandfather did this kind of work. This is very important to us.'

"Other people would tell us, 'My family has film. Who should we give it to? Can we give it to you?' We looked around at the other organizations in the state, the university, and the state historical society. None were equipped to take film. We got in touch with the American Film Institute, which encouraged us to start an archive." Observes Weiss, "After working on *From Stump to Ship* I assumed that there was a 'place' where old, regional films were being taken care of. I was pretty amazed to find that there was none."

As a result, Northeast Historical Film was founded in 1986. Sheldon describes it as "one of the only independent, nonprofit moving image archives in the country. Most are affiliated with other organizations." It is funded by its members and board of directors, and project-based grants from the Maine Arts Commission, the Maine Humanities Council, the Betterment Fund, National Video Resources, and the National Endowment for the Humanities.

In the spirit of their success with *From Stump to Ship*, Sheldon and Weiss continued offering touring programs throughout the area. "We had a program funded by the Maine Arts Council called Going to the Movies," explains Sheldon. "We put together a full program from 1921, including *The Seventh Day*, a feature film that was made on the coast of Maine, and a newsreel and short subject. The Museum of Modern Art had preserved *The Seventh Day*. They got the only surviving print from the Czechoslovakian archive. It had Czech intertitles. We first showed it with these intertitles in Bristol, Maine, where the film had been shot, to 800 people in a school gymnasium." The film tells of a group of flappers and sophisticated, hard-drinking rich boys who take their yacht out for a lark. Engine trouble keeps them in the tiny fishing town of Bristol for several days. Romance blooms between two of the city slickers and local youth, causing consternation among the parents worried over their corrupting influence. But all ends well when the city slickers see the merits of the small-town ways.

"We had no score, and no one could understand the intertitles, but it still was very profound for the people who were there. Some remember when the film was made. Some were in it; others had put pictures of the film's stars up in their houses." MoMA and the archive have since intertitled the film in English, and it now tours with a live piano accompaniment, often performed by elder pianists who improvise from popular songs of the era, as they did decades before.

Another Northeast Historic Film touring program reflects Sheldon and Weiss' attempt to piece

together and recreate a picture of the area's moviegoing history. "There are papers of a man named C.O. Richardson, who travelled through Maine in 1896 projecting films," says Sheldon. "We wrote a monologue, had an actor impersonate [Richardson], and put him up on stage in an opera house in Biddeford, Maine, which primarily is a Franco-American mill town. Then we showed a full program of films. We had a lot of fun, and I think the audience enjoyed this."

Sheldon and Weiss also have entered the video distribution business. Some of their titles (including *From Stump to Ship* and a compilation titled *Earliest Maine Films*) are historical in nature, while others (David Clark's *Tales of Wooden Water*, Huey's *Bonsoir Mes Amis*) are made by contemporary mediamakers.

"When we first showed *From Stump to Ship*, people just demanded that it come out on tape," Weiss recalls. "People wanted to show it to, say, their grandparents in nursing homes. We couldn't possibly go everywhere, and show it to everyone. The videos allow us even further access [to the community].

"We've set up separate distribution deals with the filmmaker, or with whomever holds the rights to a work. We take it case by case. Sometimes, we pay royalties; other times, we buy wholesale."

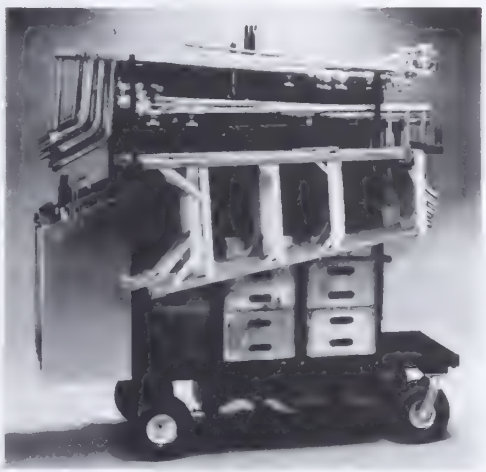
Northeast Historic Film is headquartered in a building recently purchased by the organization: the former Alamo Theatre, one of Maine's oldest standing structures built as a movie house. Inside the space, constructed in 1916, boxes upon boxes of motion picture and video equipment, books, and magazines are in the process of being opened, catalogued, and stored. The walls are adorned with oversized, beautifully illustrated posters of pre-1915 Vitagraph films.

The films now are housed in a climate-controlled storage room in the basement of Sheldon and Weiss' home in nearby Blue Hill. Eventually, this collection will be split up between Blue Hill and the Alamo. Public programs will be presented at the theater as well; the first, held this past winter, was called Backdoor Movies. Also planned is a permanent exhibition relating to the technology, images, and exhibition of moviemaking in the area.

Adds Sheldon, "We also have a database of about 5,000 individual entries. Listed are our own physical materials and holdings, as well as works that might not exist or that might be well-preserved someplace else. While we already have three-million feet of film, we know that the 'collecting' aspect of Northeast Historic Film may go on forever." Says Weiss, "It's so important that the people of northern New England get the chance to see the materials we are preserving. We are swimming in a sea of images today, most of which are relatively new. But viewing these olders films increases people's understanding of who they are and where they come from."

Rob Edelman's book on baseball films will be published this fall by Citadel Press.

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LESSONS IN SELF DEFENSE

Distribution Contracts and Arbitration Clauses

MARK LITWAK

As an entertainment attorney who represents many independent filmmakers, I often find myself in the position of trying to get unscrupulous distributors to live up to their contracts. I am constantly amazed at how many distributors simply refuse to abide by the terms of their agreements.

I am not talking about the major studios. While they engage in creative accounting by interpreting ambiguous clauses in their favor, they usually feel obliged to comply with the clear terms of their contracts. I am talking about the many small, independent distributors who flagrantly breach contracts and take unconscionable advantage of inexperienced filmmakers. Their attitude seems to be: promise anything to get the film, then defraud, deceive, and fleece with abandon. If the victim has the audacity to complain, the distributor will usually 1) lie, 2) claim the film wasn't any good, the company lost money distributing it, and therefore its obligations are terminated, or 3) offer to settle for ten cents on the dollar.

Recently I represented a filmmaker who had signed an agreement with a small distributor. The filmmaker was entitled to an advance, payable in four installments. After the second installment was paid, the company changed hands, and the new owners simply refused to make payments. There was no question that my client was entitled to the money, and nobody claimed he had not lived up to his obligations. The only excuse the distributor offered was that it was experiencing "financial problems." We offered to accept monthly payments to work off the debt. Payments were promised but never made. After an arbitrator ruled in our favor, I went to court to confirm the arbitration award and had the sheriff seize the distributor's film library. Only after that did they cough up the dough.

Distributors of low-budget films know that the amounts at stake are often not enough for the filmmaker to hire an attorney and bring suit. Consequently, one of the most important terms for the filmmaker to include in an agreement with a distributor is an arbitration clause. Such a provision says that in the event of a dispute, the matter will be settled through binding arbitration, not litigation. The difference is that litigation is a judicial process, requiring one to go to court to resolve the matter, whereas arbitration is an informal, expedited procedure before an impartial arbitrator who is not a judge.

Here is a sample arbitration clause:

ARBITRATION: Any controversy or claim arising out of or relating to this Agreement or the validity, construction, or performance of this Agreement or the breach thereof, shall be resolved by arbitration according to the rules and procedures of the American Arbitration Association, as they may be amended. Such rules and procedures are incorporated herein and made a part of this Agreement by reference. The parties agree that they will abide by and perform any award rendered in any such arbitration and that any court having jurisdiction may issue a judgment based upon the award. Moreover, the prevailing party shall be entitled to reimbursement of reasonable attorney fees and costs.

Arbitration provides a much quicker and less expensive remedy than going to court. Instead of spending years in litigation and tens of thousands of dollars in attorney's fees, matters in arbitration are often settled after a one-day hearing scheduled within a few months. The party that wins an arbitration award can then file a simple motion and ask a court to confirm the award. Once this is confirmed, it is as good as any court judgment. The filmmaker can then use the sheriff's office to enforce the judgment by seizing the defendant's money or property.

There are other ways to improve upon the standard distribution agreement. In my dispute with a small distributor, I had negotiated the original distribution agreement. I insisted that a special clause be inserted in the contract, which provided that in the event the distributor breached its promises, my client could not only recover all the money owed him, he also was entitled to regain all rights to his film. Thus my client recovered his money and film, and promptly sold the distribution rights to another distributor from whom he received another chunk of cash.

One of my current cases involves a dispute with a home video distributor. My client entered into an agreement with the distributor that guaranteed a minimum of $40,000 would be spent on marketing and sales expenses. Our audit found that the company had spent at most $26,000. We uncovered numerous errors in accounting. We contend that when the company entered into the agreement, it made fraudulent representations.

We found a number of filmmakers who had made agreements on which the company had also reneged. The distributor told one filmmaker that his film hadn't made any money, when in fact it had earned the company more than $700,000. The filmmaker, unfortunately, didn't have an arbitration clause. Because he was in desperate financial shape, he was forced to settle for $25,000, although he was owed several hundred-thousand dollars.

My experience with distributors has taught me that filmmakers need to be very careful when entering into distribution agreements. Make sure all promises are in writing. Don't turn over your original negative—give the distributor a lab access letter instead. Make sure there is a minimum advertising budget specified and that "advertising expenses" are carefully defined. One must also add strong penalties in the event that the distributor defaults.

There are a hundred ways that distributors can and do cheat filmmakers. They know all the tricks of the trade, while the filmmaker usually knows little about distribution and how to protect him- or herself. The savvy filmmaker will carefully check out potential distributors by calling other filmmakers who have dealt with them. It is also a good idea to retain an experienced producers' rep or entertainment attorney *before* the deal is concluded. An experienced negotiator will be able to obtain many important provisions just for the asking. Don't sign the "sucker" contract the distributor first sends out. Remember, everything is negotiable.

Mark Litwak is an entertainment attorney and law professor based in Santa Monica, California. He is the author of Reel Power: The Struggle for Influence and Success in the New Hollywood *and the upcoming* Dealmaking in the Film and Television Industry *(Silman-James Press).*



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Ouagadougou on $4 a day

One woman's adventures at FESPACO, the Panafrican Film Festival, and her effort to strengthen links between African and diaspora artists.

CHERYL FABIO-BRADFORD

It's December 1992, and going to Africa is the last thing on my mind. But I have been asked to attend the Festival of Panafrican Cinema and Television of Ouagadougou, familiarly called FESPACO. This is a biannual international film festival, market, and forum for discussion established in 1969 on the initiative of African filmmakers. Moreover, I've been invited as a representative of the Federation of Filmmakers and Videographers of the African Diaspora (FFVAD).

FFVAD was formalized at FESPACO '87 by a group of 22 delegates with the objective of establishing regional representation for the African diaspora. Its mission is to open a dialogue between diaspora artists of African descent and their peers on the continent and to develop guidelines with FESPACO that will enhance the ability of diaspora artists to be heard, seen, and appreciated in this African world venue. Since FESPACO '91, I have been working with producer/organizer Pearl Bowser, film director Zeinabu irene Davis, *Black Film Review* editor Jackie Jones, and Prized Pieces festival director Jackie Tshaka as the committee charged with developing the organizational structure for the U.S. region of FFVAD.*

"Even if everything were paid," I argue with the committee members, "missing my temp job for 10 days is a burden my home life can't bear." But by the time of the festival in February, my arguments crumble. I realize that I have a personal and professional responsibility to assist in this opportunity to build stronger links between African American filmmakers and our African peers.

The governing body of FESPACO is the Panafrican Federation of Filmmakers (FEPACI). Since its founding in 1970, it has heard arguments in favor of recognizing diaspora artists as regional affiliates. The concept was first spearheaded by the Washington, DC-based Ethiopian director Haile Gerima (*Harvest 3,000 Years*) and has been advanced through the years by the efforts of individual filmmakers. The all-inclusive FESPACO was espoused in 1983 by Thomas Sankara, the president of Burkina Faso (formerly Upper Volta), which is host to the festival. Sankara demonstrated his commitment by extending official invitations to diaspora artists and welcoming them to the ninth FESPACO in 1985.

The founding of FFVAD in 1987 was another indication that diaspora artists would participate in FESPACO through official regions. FFVAD's regions were defined as: 1) South America, 2) the United States, 3) the European continent, and 4) the United Kingdom/Caribbean basin.

Again in 1989 President Sankara extended a warm welcome to Africans located around the world, sending more official invitations. By this time, FFVAD had begun negotiating for office space at the Harlem Third World Trade Institute in New York City. FFVAD' s original organizing committee included film scholar Manthia Diawara, director Menelik Shabazz, film professor Abby Ford, and Pearl Bowser. But faced with a lack of institutional and financial support—handicaps compounded by the assassination of President Sankara in 1989 and a shift in Burkina Faso government priorities—FFVAD's efforts towards organizing were left unrealized.

By 1991, many of us felt it was time to try again.

The trip from San Francisco to Ouagadougou takes a day and a half. Our first stopover is in New York. From there we fly to Senegal, then to Abidjan for one day, and on to Burkina Faso. In Abidjan everyone changes money to francs, the currency used in Burkina Faso, a former French colony. Rummaging through my purse, I find a total of $36, which has to last me the eight remaining days of this trip.

When we arrive in Burkina, FESPACO staff warns us that hotel accommodations are disorganized, so it's best to claim our living quarters quickly. I get sidetracked, however. As a favor to my travel agent's friend at Access Africa, a travel company also packaging trips to FESPACO, I had agreed to hand-deliver a check to the Hotel Independence (hub of FESPACO's informal meetings). When we arrive in Ouagadougou, I escort the Access Africa travelers to the hotel, where they are told there are no more rooms. While the Access Africa check I carry ultimately straightens this situation out, in the meantime I've lost claim to my own room. It takes until 1 a.m. for FESPACO organizers to find me a replacement.

They set me up at the Eden Park Hotel. My room is a work-in-progress,

* FFVAD is interested in developing a mail list of past FESPACO attendees and those interested in future information. Please send name, address, and phone number to: FFVAD, 597 Marlesta Road, Pinole, CA 94564.



Markets spring up in Ouagadougou to accomodate the influx of visitors to FESPACO, Africa's largest cultural event.

All photos, except noted: David Turecamo

crammed with furniture and sporting a large bathroom with fine marble walls and fancy bathtub. Recently converted from a storage space, this room still doesn't have a door lock, and a lazy susan/garbage chute exudes a strange odor of decaying vegetables. Too tired to care, I shove a desk against the door and fall into a deep sleep, thankful to have found a place to rest.

The next morning, with refreshed vigor and a take-charge attitude, I get my ID badge, meal tickets, and film information, then hike for what seems like miles under the hot Sahara sun looking for a place to eat lunch. Thirst clinches my throat and claims my soul. I finally find a restaurant and settle down for my first meal in Burkina—couscous.

Back at the hotel, I meet Dellpahine B. Rauch Houekpon, director of Africare, an international organization that aids rural development of water resources, agricultural production, and sanitary services. In our conversation, she reflects on her multiple life roles—her job, her marriage to an African, and being a Black American living in Burkina. We also talk about finding the best deal in town for buying water. Water becomes quite a commodity during FESPACO. At the Hotel Independence, a two-liter bottle of Lafi mineral water sells for about $6. The same bottle goes for $1.50 in the street. If you buy water in town, the bottles are dusty holdovers from the previous FESPACO, suggesting only visitors buy them. I give Dellpahine 5,000 francs ($20 of my $36); she later drops off 12 bottles and 1,000 francs change.

At about 4 p.m. I make my way over to FESPACO's opening ceremony, held in an athletic stadium. The crowd is divided into general and VIP seating. I sit in the bleachers with about 100 school children dressed in red, yellow, and black, the FESPACO festival colors. Burkina town folk are in the crowd, but it is clear this event is not staged with them in mind. Uniformed military guards control the crowds; morale among the locals is at best a secondary issue during this elaborate spectacle.

The show takes unexpected twists and turns. Burkina's current President, Blaise Campore, makes an official appearance—this is, after all, one of the continent's largest cultural events. A hot air balloon is launched during his address. Mid-speech, the balloon threatens to topple over on the crowd. The commotion completely drowns out the President's speech. Next an elaborate laser show depicts FESPACO's logo-in-motion—an African heroine perched high on a galloping stallion. This is introduced by a misplaced theme song from *Planet of the Apes*, which soon segues into impressive African a cappella music. The finale is a dazzling display of fireworks. In total, the event is excessive.

The long day winds up on a high note: the opening night screening of Ousmane Sembène's new film, *Guelwaar* (1992). Sembène has been a fixture at FESPACO since its beginning. The festival officially starts only when this Senegalese director takes his traditional spot by the pool at the Hotel Independence, chatting in the night air with film aficionados from all over Africa. *Guelwaar* depicts the disappearance of a famous resistance fighter's body from the morgue on the day of his funeral. Theories about this mystery abound among friends and family. Then it is revealed that the deceased activist, who was a Catholic, was mistakenly buried in a Muslim cemetery. The film is in French and Wolof; we view a print without English subtitles. Even those fluent in French seem to have difficulty following the entangled plot. Nonetheless, I hear praise for the dialogue and claims that this critique of the conflicting allegiances among one people is indeed Sembène's finest film.

It is now my third day in Ouagadougou and I have learned to negotiate my way. It's time to realize my mission: to advocate for an increased level of participation for diaspora artists in FEPACI and at the film festival.

FEPACI is currently composed of African filmmakers from over 30 countries. It is the body that serves as an advocate for African cinema inside the continent and abroad. Organized by region, FEPACI's regional secretaries are in charge of implementing activities and policies. Its General Secretary provides leadership over the various recommendations and mandates that are drawn up every four years during FEPACI's congressional meetings. These meetings generally last the duration of the FESPACO festival.

I happen into a group of anglophone Africans caucusing to prepare for the FEPACI congressional meetings. Participants are reviewing specific achievements in the English-speaking countries (including Gambia, Cameroon, Botswana, Nigeria, Ghana, and Liberia, among others): the number of film completions, the increased cooperation between regions, and the growth in the use of African postproduction facilities. The availability of African film everywhere but Africa is another item on the agenda, as is the need for an anglophone newsletter.

The meeting is wrapping up. I've missed my chance to present the issue of diaspora artists to this group. I do manage to catch up with the meeting's chair, Ghanaian film director Bouamari Mohamed (*L'Heritage*). I express the nature of FFVAD concerns. He, in turn, suggests that I attend a meeting that evening of the Federal Bureau, the body that sets the agenda for





The opening ceremony in Ouagadougou's sports stadium included dancing, singing, hot air balloons, fireworks, and a speech from Burkina Faso President Blaise Campore (pictured in white).

Below: courtesy FESPACO

FEPACI's week-long congressional meeting. Panafricanism at FESPACO is to be the central topic of discussion. I agree to come.

Mohamed talks at length about the language division at FESPACO, indicating that the time has past when francophone Africa would be permitted to dominate FEPACI/FESPACO activities. Such domination, Mohamed says, is rooted in the fact that Burkina Faso is a former French colony and the shift in the interpretation of Panafricanism pre- and post-Sankara. In fact, he adds, anglophone Africa will be insisting on parity in the leadership of the upcoming congressional meetings.

Back in my room I locate the fax buried in a suitcase from the U.S. region of FFVAD. The issues I have been asked to present are:

1. Arrange to work with FESPACO for one year to set standards for selecting films from the diaspora for inclusion in FESPACO;

2. Receive information on the criteria used by FESPACO for selecting individuals to jury the Paul Robeson Award (specifically established for diaspora artists);

3. Establish an African American panel to select between one and 11 films per year from FESPACO to tour the U.S. through African American community-based organizations;

4. Establish goals for improving the presence of African American independent filmmakers at FESPACO;

5. Coordinate a seminar on Black diaspora independents in conjunction with FESPACO, to be planned well in advance for FESPACO '95.

6. Establish a network between FESPACO and a selected group in the US to centralize planning for diaspora artists and visitors wishing to attend FESPACO; to coordinate other mutually agreed upon activities; and to recognize and inform each entity of fundraising efforts for the purpose of implementing this diaspora-organizing plan. In all, FFVAD hopes to improve the communication link between FESPACO, FEPACI, and FFVAD.

Before the meeting, I decide to catch *Samba Traoré* (1992), a film by Burkina director Idrissa Ouédraogo. Set in Ouagadougou, it begins with an act of murder committed by Samba, the central character, and his accomplice, who is also killed. Samba escapes to his home village with a suitcase full of money and begins a new life, but this act of violence haunts him. Afterwards, my friends and I discuss its success as a morality tale. We then part company, and I set out to find the Federal Bureau meeting.

This is an unsuccessful attempt. I meet a journalist who is also looking for the meeting. We search for about an hour before my stomach gets queasy. The evening degenerates into a sorry tale of diarrhea, a broken hotel key, a "rescue" with my door being chopped down but not replaced, and finally a flight to refuge in a friend's room at the Hotel Independence.

The next day disappointed participants report that the meeting lasted until midnight and consisted completely of verbal readings of reports that had already been submitted. The issues mentioned by Mohamed were never addressed.

Both times I have attended FESPACO, in 1991 and this year, there has been much well-founded criticism of how disorganized the festival is. Locating events can be a major ordeal. I personally found getting oriented through the film literature to be quite difficult. Better planning would improve attendance at the meetings, symposiums, and receptions. On the other hand, this is one of Africa's poorest regions. Literally thousands of people pour into this city for 10 days. Given the festival's scant resources, its mix of cultures, the issues of language, and its location in Ouagadougou, a city that is more rural than urban (though more urban than a lot of African communities), I am amazed at FESPACO's relative level of success.

It's Monday, day four. I hear FEPACI is convening at the UNESCO building with simultaneous French/English translation. The meeting is to convene at 9 a.m., but it starts at 10:30. There's an enormous concern with process. Anglophone countries take a leadership role in the proceedings. I begin to get mentally organized. Boumari Mohamed is elected chair of this year's FEPACI congress. Later, he describes the rambling process of the first day's meetings as "government culture." He restates the significant differences in FESPACO and FEPACI before and since the assassination of Sankara, reflected primarily in the loss of his vision of FESPACO as a truly Panafrican event. The day winds up being entirely dedicated to developing the process by which the congress will be run.

Tuesday, day five. Anglophone delegates are at a disadvantage. There are reports from FEPACI's regions, treasurer, and secretary general to review, discuss, and vote on, but the English translations have been held up because of duplicating logistics. At best I can wing it and take cues from what I see and hear.

At least I am beginning to understand the structure of FEPACI and its



Outside the Cine Burkina, Ouagadougou's plushest theater, Martinique director Euzan Palcy signs autographs. Her newest project, *Simeon*, was featured at the festival.

Ousmane Sembène (right), in his favorite spot by the Hotel Independence pool, is interviewed by Kenyan novelist and political activist Ngugi Wa'Thiongo, who is directing a film on Sembène with US scholar Manthia Diawara. Director of photography Larry Banks (in white hat) previously DPed on *Juice*.



need for solid member organizations. To participate, each region must be able to function with consistency, feed into the FEPACI process, make reports, contribute to the financial and technical resource pool, and generally meet objectives that enhance the direction and mission of FEPACI and FESPACO. Listening to the regional reports, it is clear FFVAD will have to define itself in a manner that will further the vision of FEPACI as a continental African film organization with international partnerships. In contrast to other member groups, FFVAD has, up to this point, been a notion unrealized.

FFVAD has to complete the membership paperwork (again), pay annual dues, and contribute to the public commentary in *Escrans d'Afrique*, the slick new publication of FEPACI. The question remains whether FFVAD will be successful in establishing itself financially while at the same time identifying resources that will help stimulate this Panafrican effort.

FEPACI is now at the point where its scope has grown to such a level that just sustaining itself requires a stronger management model. During the afternoon session FEPACI Secretary General Gaston Kaboré presents his report, which calls for a new structure for FEPACI. His report tackles a number of large topics: FEPACI's structural functioning; a feasibility study for a new professional training facility; and FEPACI partnerships with such entities as the Organization of African Unity, the European Community, and the Centro Orientamento Educative, a producer/distributor of African films and a collaborator in the publication of *Escrans d'Afrique*. Kaboré's report also indicates that the federation is more in line with its Panafrican ambitions because of its growing involvement with anglophone Africa. As FEPACI deals with this Panafrican vision, it will be necessary to look to the United Nations for a new partnership.

Later that evening at a reception, I meet the Secretary General of FESPACO, Filippe Sawadogo, who agrees to a meeting at six o'clock the next morning. We will discuss FFVAD's concerns and FESPACO collaborations.

That evening I join a group of women for dinner at Le Wassa club, then rush off to see Euzhan Palcy's new feature film, *Siméon*. The film is shown in a cement building which distorts the sound. Again there are no subtitles. Set in the West Indies, this fantasy film focuses on an old music teacher who is determined to "win the world over to creole" by creating a West Indian musical trend. After the musician dies, his friend, a 10-year-old girl, realizes his dream with a simple act of love.

Wednesday, day seven. After my morning meeting with Sawadogo, which goes quite well, I begin to think that FFVAD/FESPACO collaborations will be possible and mutually beneficial. Sawadogo begins to see the potential of working with FFVAD. No conclusions are reached, but we agree to continue the dialogue on issues put forth by the U.S. region of FFVAD.

I then return to FEPACI. The morning is devoted to debate over Kaboré's report. Finally, after what seems like an extreme amount of deliberation, it is approved. I stay through the morning session, then decide to check in with the front desk at Hotel Independence. My emergency stay, now in its third day, has created a major upset around the hotel, and takes hours to unravel.

At lunch, my bad luck continues; I discover I lost my meal tickets at some point between last night's dinner and the movie. I have ten dollars to my name, with three days to go. Each meal becomes a strategy. Fortunately, Hotel Independence has assigned me a new room to which breakfast can be charged. So today I quietly have a lunch of bread and water and am comforted knowing that I'm guaranteed breakfast each day. Many people have helped me get this far. I'm embarrassed at my newest predicament.

Thursday, more FEPACI. By now, all of the reports have been translated, presented, and adopted. The reports seem reasonably straightforward; nothing earth-shattering. We have just determined our concluding process: group discussions of committee topics, followed by a breakout session for drafting committee recommendations, finishing up with a presentation of the recommendations to the entire FEPACI Congress.

I join the general policy committee with 16 people from all over Africa. I am the sole representative from the diaspora. Once again I reiterate the issues that I raised with Sawadogo and in the general session. My trip is beginning to feel productive. By 8 p.m. we are still formulating recommendations and have yet to merge all the input into one comprehensive document. As the only non-French-speaking person, there is a point when translating for me is delaying the process. I bid adieu.

A Black film distributor from Botswana joins me to see *Malcolm X* dubbed in French. My South African friend doesn't think the locals will get the point of Malcolm's stature. The American experiences, he believes, do not translate well into the French language.

Tonight is also the premiere of *Sankofa*, Haile Gerima's latest film. It is a forceful depiction of the crosscultural experience of the African slave



Among the U.S. films appearing at FESPACO was Ruby L. Oliver's *Love Your Mama*, a drama set in a Chicago ghetto, with Audrey Morgan (right) and Carol E. Hall.

Courtesy Hemdale

trade. Mona, a contemporary fashion model, is catapulted into the past, where she faces the horrors of slavery, then rebels and takes fate into her own hands. The film is set in Cape Coast Castle in Ghana, one of many departure points for millions of Africans entering slavery. It is a story that makes important links between diaspora experiences, especially around slavery, oppression, and the need to reclaim our own images. Gerima's editing feels uncomfortable in its style of restating the obvious. *Sankofa* is a film that will undoubtedly catch on slowly in the United States, probably only after being lauded throughout the rest of the world for its eloquence of vision.

Late Thursday night, we're back at Hotel Independence. I'm in my favorite spot at a lounge table by the pool; clusters of film buffs chat about the films seen and missed. The night breeze is heavenly. Sembène is by the pool, surrounded by a small gathering of old friends and admirers. My mind begins to drift back home. Is my boy okay? Has my teenager worn down her stepfather's last nerve? Will this trip be my financial undoing? Oh, how good the night air feels!

Some of my traveller friends have developed a myth that my lack of luck will translate into good luck at the hotel casino. They invite me to join them. I play my last 40 cents and win six dollars.

Friday is departure day. The FEPACI general policy committee is still knee-deep in writing its recommendations. I hear they worked until midnight last night. I meet up with friends to do last minute shopping. Trading T-shirts designed by my husband, I collect enough trinkets to convince my

African Films Face Roadblocks on Home Ground

When FESPACO began 23 years ago, there were films from only five African nations. The organizers, it is said, decided to hold the event every two years to give people a chance to save up for the airfare to Ouagadougou. In 1971 it was cancelled due to a now forgotten war between Burkina Faso (then known as Upper Volta) and neighboring Mali. This year there were more than 200 films from 60 countries around the world, and while some people may have saved for two years to get there, the international elite that descended on "Ouaga" hardly seemed to notice that the taxi fares rivaled New York's.

FESPACO is now the single most important cultural event in Africa, a gigantic, week-long celebration of cinema, arts, and ideas. Besides filmmakers, distributors, and journalists, the festival draws an impressive roster of celebrities and intelligentsia. Kenyan writer Ngugi Wa Thiong'O and film critic Manthia Diawara arrived with a high-powered American film crew to document the event. Alice Walker was there with Tracy Chapman. They'd "always wanted to come." John Singleton, writer/director wunderkind of *Boyz N the Hood*, slipped in and out of screenings without fanfare. Martinique director Euzan Palcy (*Dry White Season*) tried to see films in between interviews about her latest film, *Simeon*.

By eight o'clock every morning, the thatch-roofed breakfast patio at the Hotel Independence was filled with wheelers and dealers, producers and packagers from European TV. There were reporters, critics, and actors networking over croissants and coffee. Everyone insisting, "See this film."

The screenings began at 11 a.m. and ran until after midnight at 13 theaters scattered throughout this dusty West African capital. From the plush Cine Burkina to the open air Cine Oubri, audiences lined up for the chance to see *Malcolm X*, dubbed in French, *Gito L'Ingrat*, the first feature film produced in Burundi, and *Thomas Sankara*, a documentary about Burkina's assassinated president. The 200-plus films ranged from the mildly amusing, like *Le Clandestin*, a comedy from Algeria, to the dreadful, like *Sankofa*, a beautifully photographed one-note diatribe against slavery. And there were absolutely entralling works, like *Rabi*, a lyrical study of life's passages, by Gaston Kabore of Burkina.

FESPACO is big. Attendees filled every square inch of hotel space in town. FESPACO is important. When the top honor was awarded to a film from the Ivory Coast, Ivorians in the audience chanted, "The Ivory Coast has won, the Ivory Coast has won." The prize inspired a kind of nationalistic fervor matched only by soccer's World Cup.

But if FESPACO's size and significance have grown since it began in 1969, it has also made the fundamental problems of African filmmaking more visible. Thirty years after most countries won their independence from Europe, their films, like their economies, are still wedded to "the North." Though the festival competition is open exclusively to African cinema, the films are heavily financed by French and German television, international development agencies, or the governments of their countries of origin. One film's opening credits read, "Produced in association with the Danish Volunteer Services, the Danish National Forest and Nature Agency, the Media Office of the Ministry of Education of Denmark, Ministry of the Environment, Denmark, DANITA, and the Danish Red Cross." This is an African film?

Filmmakers have found themselves having to tailor scripts to fit the requirements of an aid organization. UNICEF, for instance, held a press conference mid-week at FESPACO to encourage producers and directors to make films for and about children. Ironically, the theme of FESPACO this year was Cinema and Liberties, but whatever relevance that may have had

family that I have indeed been to Africa. A young boy who is a street vendor swaps my last Malcolm X shirt for a bracelet of cowry shells. He's delighted; so am I.

The trip is winding down, and I meet it with mixed feelings. I regret how much I've missed, being preoccupied with mundane survival matters. I'm amazed at how few films I've seen. But last night, having looked over my shoulder and seen Sembène sitting there by the pool, as he does each year, I knew I was privileged to be a witness.

It's mid-afternoon, and the heat from the Sahara sun is blistering. I have been joined by a young filmmaker from Cameroon. In self-conscious, broken English, he tells me of the political turmoil of his country. Gradually his English smooths out as he speaks about producing his films while living half the year in Paris and half in his village. He tells me of coming home to learn about the death of a cousin, an aunt, or a neighbor in the political turbulence. This young filmmaker has helped crystallize the heart of my trip to FESPACO.

Such witnessing—of individual stories and of a continental strivings—is extremely important at FESPACO. FEPACI provided firsthand experience in the managing of sub-Sahara African diversity. And though the festival is a showcase of stories born from a core of difference, they emerge as tales with universal messages.

Leaving Burkina Faso is harder than entering. When I present my ticket, the Air Afrique attendant claims there are no more seats. The next plane doesn't leave Africa until next Wednesday. Twenty of us are to be left behind. Tears well up in my eyes. I think of my little boy. I have no money now. The airport turns to pandemonium as angry travellers insist something must be done. A Black South African news reporter tells me not to worry, she'll get me on the plane. Friends promise to phone my family, slip me francs, hug me, and say it will work out.

For once, it does. They call my name and ask for my bags. Seats are found for all 20 of us. We board the plane and take flight. It's dark now, and as the plane ascends, Ouagadougou twinkles below. At this moment, I know I'll be back.

Cheryl Fabio-Bradford is a media producer, film programmer, and free-lance writer who lives in the Oakland Bay Area.



Like most African films, Ousmane Sembène's latest work, *Guelwaar*, will have a tough time getting into African theaters, which are dominated by Hollywood and Indians fare.

Courtesy Film Society of Lincoln Center.

was lost amid the funding themes of reforestation, gender roles, and birth control. There were several films this year dealing with each.

The biggest problem facing what could be a thriving film industry is distribution. Most screens are dominated by U.S. and Indian productions. SterKinekor, the largest theater chain in southern Africa, is also among the world's top 10 consumers of Hollywood movies—right up there with the U.S., Canada, England, and the rest of Europe. They control an enormous market—more than 400,000 theaters in South Africa alone—but it is geared mainly to South Africa's four million whites.

"African films are relegated to a cultural ghetto," says director Simon Bright of Zimbabwe. "There are now 30 'African' film festivals from Tokyo to Los Angeles, but only one of them is held in Africa." In an effort to help change this, Bright plans to initiate a new African film festival this fall in Harare, Zimbabwe. "When a lot of the audience is somewhere else," he explains, "they're looking at these films to find 'exotic' cinema, the 'village film,' in which Africans are just one step removed from Tarzan. When will Africans be allowed to make movies for the sake of sheer entertainment?"

John Riber, a producer from Zimbabwe, blames it on donor funding. "It's created a laziness among some filmmakers," he says. "Too many filmmakers feel their job is done once they've raised funding from a development agency. The film doesn't have to be good, doesn't have to draw audiences the way a *Terminator* does, because it's paid for."

Yet the mere fact that a film *is* African virtually guarantees that it will draw African audiences who seldom get a chance to see Africa portrayed by Africans. Certainly most of the audience at FESPACO is Burkinabe, local residents anxious for a brief respite from kung fu and car chases.

Yet even the continent's leading directors don't acknowledge the importance of their own markets. *Guelwaar*, a brilliant film by Senegal's internationally acclaimed Ousmane Sembène, was shown out of competition, presumably because the film had a chance to win a prize at Cannes and would automatically be disqualified if it had competed in any other festival. The result is that the top prizes at FESPACO then may be awarded to films of lesser distinction.

But like the hero of *Gito L'Ingrat*, an African torn between the cultures of Europe and his village, it is a dilemma that the filmmakers are not afraid to confront. As Sembène himself observed, "To be an African filmmaker is not merely a right, but a responsibility."

DAVID TURECAMO

David Turecamo produces a weekly access program in Manhattan, Africa Up & Down.

INDEPENDENTS ARE READY FOR QUICKTIME

But Is Quicktime Ready to Roll?

LUKE MATTHEW HONES

In Wim Wenders' *The State of Things*, a movie about making a movie, the storyboard is on a computer. As the viewer watches, the computer slowly scans a frame onto the green monitor, about one frame per minute. Back in 1983, this seemed a revolutionary idea, and the irony of its impracticality only strikes home from this distant time. For in 1993 we have Quicktime.

What does Quicktime do? Apple Computer has set up an easy to use, nonlinear desktop video system. It is, in effect, a digital flatbed on which you can grab audio and video clips, like the kind a film editor works with, place them next to each other, and do A/B roll edits between them. Your dissolve will play back in a separate window. Didn't like the timing? Trim it. Look at it again. Do the kind of off-lining in a few minutes that once took hours, or days, to perform.

When you are done with your off-line, save your project to an edit decision list and load it up in an on-line system. Or store and distribute your video on disk.

The promise of Quicktime is liberating, but is it right for you? An examination of the underlying technology of Quicktime, where it is going, and how much it costs may help you answer that question for yourself.

When the first personal computers came on the market in the late 1970s, the only software programs computer owners had were programming languages, the building blocks behind all the software we use now. This changed when certain entrepreneurs became rich by selling programs they had developed for use by other people. These first programs were primarily word-processing programs. They allowed you to type text in and read it before you printed it—a far cry from their spell-checking, thesaurus-laden descendants.

When these programs became more sophisticated, they started to give the dedicated word processors a run for their money. In 1981 you could buy an IBM Displaywriter word processor, that is, a machine that did only word processing, for around $15,000. By 1984 you could buy a computer with the same word-processing features, plus budget and painting programs, for $3,000. Suddenly writers could develop first drafts, spell check their documents, move passages around, and make corrections without retyping from the beginning. As each year passes there are fewer writers who would trade the convenience of computers for the romance of the Underwood or the quill.

At the core of personal computers is a programming code called "system software." System software handles the mundane task of computing, like making sure the "K" you press on the keyboard registers as a "K" on your computer screen and on your printer.

The company that is famous for the usefulness of its system software is Apple Computer. Apple used Xerox PARC research on Human Interface Design to develop the system software for the Macintosh, or Mac. Apple has since spent many years studying how normal people use Macs and has refined the Mac system software based on their findings.

Which takes us back to the world of film and video. While personal computers were assisting the work of writers, publishers, and photographers, film editors were still physically cutting and splicing film, and video editors worked on $30,000 edit controllers (the Displaywriters of video). Some special effect programs even required you to be a Pascal programmer.

Then two key products came on the market in the late 1980s. One was Newtek's Video Toaster. The other was Avid Technologies' Media Com-



Premiere's Construction Window, showing a cross-stretch transition.

Courtesy Adobe

poser. The Amiga-based Video Toaster has inputs for video sources and one program output. The Toaster takes four functions of a video suite which have always had dedicated processors—program switcher, paintbox, stillstore, and character generator—and put them all into one box. The year before the Toaster came out, a low-end broadcast character generator without a hard drive cost $10,000. The Toaster, which is broadcast quality, adds three more functions and costs under $4,000. The Toaster provides high quality at an affordable price.

The Avid Media Composer is something else altogether. The Avid is based on a Mac and offers nonlinear editing of film or video. It accomplishes this by storing all the important information—the visuals, audio, and any control codes like time code—on a huge hard disk. You then work with this copy of your footage to assemble an edit decision list of your project off-line. To preview your project, you play the edit decision list. As each new audio or visual segment is needed, it is instantaneously pulled from the hard drive and played. The Avid and its competitors offer a great off-line solution for film and video producers, but for a price. Nonlinear systems like the Avid start at about $25,000.

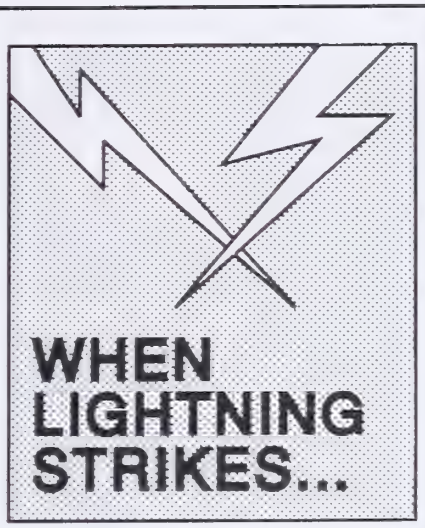
These products broke two barriers: price and ease of use. Suddenly, the Toaster guaranteed that high-end video equipment didn't have to cost over $10,000. With the AVID, sophisticated systems were being developed that didn't require programming expertise on the part of the user.

By 1992, over 10 years after the personal computer revolution, video and film producers were poised to catch up with writers, publishers, photographers, and just about everybody else in using personal computers to get their creative work done.

Then came Quicktime. Quicktime is actually a part of the Mac's system software, not a program itself. Quicktime's program code provides a common language, a standard, for people developing software and hardware. The development of Quicktime is akin to the development of a format, like 16mm film. Once the standards are agreed upon, different manufacturers can get to work on developing equipment and programs with the assurance of providing the user with compatibility.

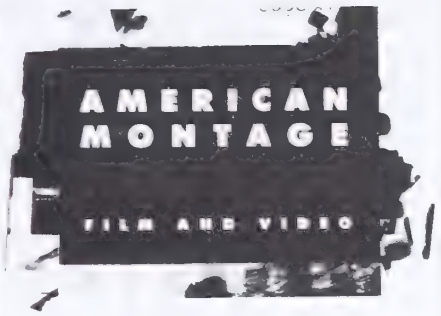
Give Apple's marketing department credit. Though few of us have real life experience with Quicktime, every time mediamakers hear the word, they salivate. Part of it is the name. With "Quicktime" your work will be fast, clean, and cool. Video for Windows, a comparable product in every respect, sounds like the corkscrew on a swiss army knife.

For the mediamaker who yearns for order in the workplace, Quicktime promises order. You can feed video and audio into a computer from a VCR. You then edit your movie on a computer screen, viewing both the image in a window and a timeline representation of the movie. The video and the audio are kept on separate tracks for independent



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editing. The editing is nonlinear, like film and unlike video, so 57 minutes into a program you can go back and change the beginning without having to reedit the entire piece. Quicktime operates on a Macintosh, the state of the art for ease of use and an affordable platform for many of us. Quicktime reads and works with time code, can be programmed to produce an edit decision list, and has plenty of special effects. It is the promise of an end to all-night editing and numbing miscalculations. It is an editing system that will forgive.

What equipment is required to set up a Quicktime system? Ouch.

First, if you have a Mac 128k, 512k, 512ke, Plus, SE, Classic, Portable, or Powerbook 100, you'll have to buy a new Mac to run Quicktime. If you want to run at 30 frames a second (approximately video speed), you must have a Mac Quandra or Centris. Ideally you want a system with a Motorola 68040 processor (a.k.a. a "six-eighty-forty") and from 20 to 24 megabytes of Random Access Memory (a.k.a. "RAM"). You will also need a color computer monitor. The bigger the monitor is, the easier it will be to work with the images and audio on screen.

Price of base computer: $3,000-10,000.

A computer's hard drive is where your video and audio will be stored. You need a huge hard drive, in the gigabytes, to store Quicktime movies of more than a few minutes in length. The drive will have to have an access time of less than 11 milliseconds. The burst rate must be better than five megabytes a second. The rotational speed should be at least 5,400 rpm. With such a drive you can store about 33 minutes of video/audio on a one gigabyte drive with a low quality setting. At the highest quality you can store 16 minutes.

Price of one gigabyte drive: $1,500.

You will need an interface card to transfer the material from your tape onto the hard drive. Most of the cards have inputs and outputs, so you can record a rough draft of your project off of the computer. Most cards have Y/C video inputs and outputs for those wanting that feature. These cards are also being developed with built-in compression hardware, which is designed to increase the amount of video and audio you can store on your computer without degrading the quality. Look for cards with JPEG (Joint Photographic Expert Group) capabilities or, in the future, Wavelet compression technology.

Price of interface card: $2,000-6,000.

You will need software to edit and run your Quicktime movies, although a great package like Adobe Premiere may come with your interface card, saving you the need to purchase any new software. The software will provide you with wipes, titling, A/B roll, and possibly edit-decision list export capabilities. You may want to buy more than one software package, since some of them have very specialized effects.

Price of software: $0-2,000.

Need to use time code so you can do an edit decision list? That's another interface card. Or you could purchase one of the new computer controlled video decks (there is a Hi8 model by Sony). With this type of deck you can transfer your time code right through the cable that con-

A filmstrip as it appears on your computer using Adobe Premiere 2.0, one of the desktop editing software programs that utilizes Quicktime.

Courtesy Adobe

nects the deck to the computer.

Price of time code interface: $1,500-2,500.

You will need a VCR and monitor. The VCR must have audio and video outputs, preferably stereo audio. Remember there are special considerations for transferring time code to your computer.

Price of VCR and monitor: $500-4,000.

Finally, you are going to need expert technical assistance. If you're not familiar with computers, and the technology is this new, and you've spent this much money, you want to cut down on the aggravation of a complex set-up. Find someone who is in your circle of acquaintances. Whomever you choose, remember setting up the workstation will be only the beginning of a long relationship.

Price of expert assistance: $200-2,000.

So how much does it cost to be on the cutting edge in film and video? Anywhere from $8,700 to $28,000. You should also count on spending a fair amount of money (at least $200) every year to upgrade as new products come out to enhance your system.

How long before your system will be out of date? While there are still plenty of writers working on computer systems with 10-year-old word processing software, as the years go by it is getting increasingly difficult for them to transfer their work to other computers.

Some computer consultants estimate that if you have a computer and need to keep current with new technology, you will probably replace your system every 18 months.

There are also concerns associated with being too new. Quicktime, as a commercial product, is less than a year-and-a-half old, and there are still several problems to work out. The first is it takes such an expensive system to run Quicktime. It costs nearly as much as an Avid, but is not as stable as the Avid's software.

To address this issue, engineers from Apple and other developers are continuing to work on compression hardware and software. As these developers come up with compression/decompression (a.k.a. codec) strategies (a.k.a. algorithms), you will see more manageable hardware requirements for storing video and audio.

The software team behind Quicktime is also working on making Quicktime scalable, which means Quicktime will be able to work on a wide variety of systems, not just top-of-the-line Macs. The price of equipment used for Quicktime, and multimedia, is coming down as well. In 1992, a 1.5 gigabyte Maxtor hard drive from NCA Peripherals (Sunnyvale, CA) cost $2,300. Today it costs around $1,440.

Another issue if you are using a Quicktime or

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any disk-based system is the amount of time it takes to load and unload material on the computer. Your source footage must be loaded in real time onto the hard drive. Because of the limitations of space, you will probably not be able to load all of your source material at once. If you have to unload the material out of the computer to make way for more source material or another project, you have to back it up to a disk or a backup tape device. For people used to popping a tape in a deck and rolling, these two processes are a completely different way of working.

Finally, the Mac, in a way, is a bit of a siren as far as system problems go. The unsuspecting user is lulled into complacency by a truly easy to use system. But when things go wrong, ease of use deteriorates quickly into chaos. Mac error messages may say, "Unable to open unknown application. Had to close file. Type 1 error." Huh? Troubleshooting a simple word processing set-up (computer plus printer) can be difficult, but how do you troubleshoot a Quicktime workstation full of new technology? Is it the RAM? The interface card? The gigabyte hard drive? You?

There are two recourses: Take your system into an authorized dealer and have them chase down the problem, or become a Quicktime/Macintosh expert. The first solution will cost you time and money and may not even solve the problem satisfactorily, for they may know nothing about Quicktime and the different pieces of equipment in your system. The second solution will cost you time and money and may take you away from making films.

Regardless of the problems, Quicktime is an important technical advance which will soon be changing the way mediamakers work. To get ready for that time, you must get your hands on a Quicktime workstation. One recommendation is to approach an organization that gives computer workshops and take a class on Quicktime. You might offer your services as an instructor who can bring film aesthetics to the classroom. Realize computer people have completely different skills than you do, and both can profit by the affiliation.

If you have a local media arts center, you should work with them to get a system donated or purchased. They're in the business to take technical risks independent producers are not able to take.

If you definitely want to buy a system, make sure you are teamed up with a partner who understands computers, video, and you.

Make no mistake: simple, inexpensive nonlinear editing for video and film is just around the corner. However, using Quicktime today, in the summer of 1993, is expensive and for the adventurous. The people you now see working with Quicktime are pioneers in the truest sense: some of them will profit from their risk-taking, some will leave their bones to bleach in the hot desert sun.

Luke Matthew Hones is program director at the Bay Area Video Coalition in San Francisco.

RADIO ACTIVE

Why Independents Should Consider Radio Production

BENJAMIN SHAPIRO



Independents can easily make radio production an integrated outgrowth of their film and video projects.

Radical changes are steadily coming to film and video technology and distribution systems, and independents are often the last to know. But even as relative outsiders to new tech developments, independents are often by necessity and disposition both masters of "appropriate technology" and experimenters with new production tools. Independents, for example, pioneered small format video as a professional medium, deliberately sacrificing a degree of image quality in favor of ownership of the production tools. Film- and videomakers are increasingly becoming "media-makers" as they move into multimedia and various fusions of film and video, computer graphics, sound design, and interactive forms.

But one previously existing medium is frequently overlooked: radio and other forms of audio-only production, such as cassettes or sound installations. The most obvious reason is radio's absence of images, but it also has historical causes, such as the particular format that passes for radio in this country and the isolation of the independent audio/radio and filmmaking communities from each other. There has been some overlap; a number of sound designers and editors, especially in what became the seventies' "new Hollywood," originally worked in community and public radio.

Independents can easily make radio production an integrated outgrowth of their film and video projects. There is also the aesthetic richness of radio to consider, plus the comparative ease of mounting projects and reaching substantial audiences. All this makes the medium another compelling option in the greater media environment.

"Radio" in this context means sophisticated audio production that can take the form of documentaries, fictional stories, or experimental sound constructions. This kind of radio, which lies somewhere between film, literature, and music, is still largely unknown in this country, although elsewhere in the world radio exists as a parallel art form, relying on texture, imagery, and the narrative importance of place and character. This sort of production is widely practiced, supported, and listened to in Europe, where there are prestigious festivals, such as the radio-only Prix Italia and Berlin festivals, where attendees spend days listening to and judging a wide array of programs.

In this country, these sorts of audio productions can be found scattered about on public and community radio (although hour-long, sound rich, poetic documentaries are rarely heard). National Public Radio's (NPR's) nationally distributed programs *All Things Considered* and *Morning Edition* use clearly defined conventions of reportage and storytelling, but the stories are often models of simple, direct writing and can incorporate good uses of sound (while other stories are basically "stand-ups": reporters reading copy).

Two other weekly NPR programs, *Horizons* and *Soundprint*, are more varied and often more interesting in terms of production technique. These are the *P.O.V.*s of radio in the United States, and each week they feature a half-hour radio documentary by different producers. *Horizons*' programs focus on women, people of color, the elderly, and the handicapped and cover anything from cultural history to profiles of artists or musicians. *Soundprint* runs programs on just about anything of documentary interest.

National audiences number from the hundreds-of-thousands for independently distributed radio programs, while about nine-million listeners weekly tune in to NPR's news programs (which are the toughest for freelance producers to penetrate). The public radio distribution system is certainly more flexible and accessible to producers than public television, however, and producers can successfully market programs directly to stations or design other distribution efforts to reach specific audience segments or regions of listeners.

As a production medium, radio has the advantage of decentralization, potentially large audiences, and independence from mass market economics. Groups that have historically been marginalized or excluded from media production now operate their own radio stations and distribution entities. For example, American Indian Radio on Satellite (AIROS), a joint project of the Indigenous Communication Association and the Native American Public Broadcasting Consortium, is developing a satellite network of Native American radio stations. AIROS will both produce shows and coordinate the exchange of programming by member stations, and will also offer these shows to other public and community stations. A consortium of Latino-controlled bilingual stations is also building its own satellite distribution network.

These projects are feasible because the technical costs of radio are low. An individual with a $600 sound-gathering package and access to a reel-to-reel tape machine can take a radio production through to the mixing stage. Compared to film, documentary radio is not labor intensive: one person can easily move into a location, set up equipment, and do an interview. It is also possible

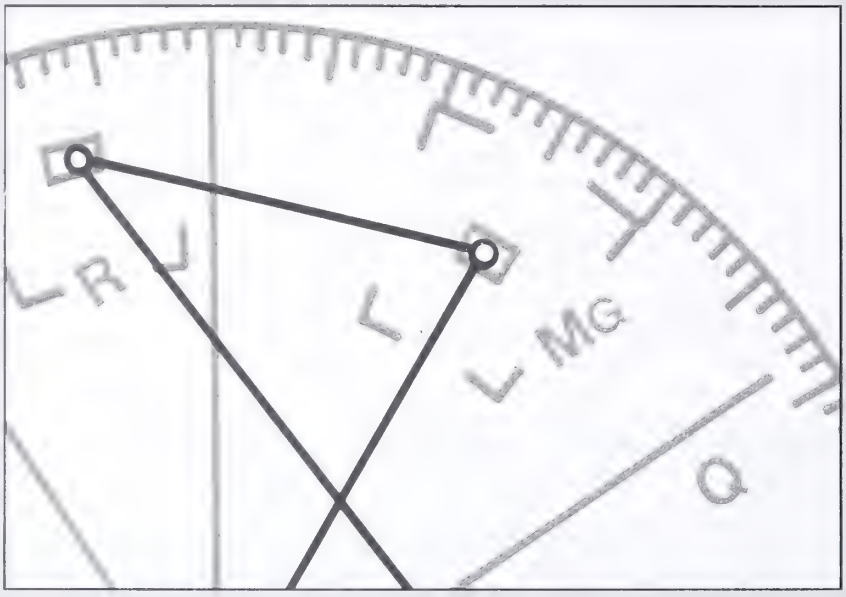
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to glean good sound for a radio program from shoot footage. DAT, Nagra, video f.m. (i.e. the hi-fi tracks on half-inch tape), and Beta SP tracks are all eminently of "broadcast quality" (assuming, of course, a proficient microphone technique is used on original recording). Tapes made on 3/4" decks with noise reduction are usable, but linear tracks without Dolby are marginal and 16mm optical tracks are notoriously awful. As far as recording technique is concerned, ambience is more distracting in the audio-only format than in film, because there are no visual clues like moving mouths to help clarify what's said. Close miked, crisply recorded voices usually work best for radio.

Conversely, some sounds that aren't always specifically sought during film shoots can prove invaluable in radio. In radio, sounds disclose detail—they are the aural equivalent of cutaways or close-ups, introducing us to a location or providing a transition. In one recent NPR program an interview occurred in a graveyard, with the subject discussing the ancestors he discovered by reading headstones. After the interview, the producer picked up the ambient sounds of cricket chirping, water drips, and a car drive-by in the distance. These were mixed in and added significantly to the scene. Film sound recordists often gather incidental location sound as a matter of course.

Postproduction tends to occur more on paper in radio than in film editing. Paper edits are more predictable and reliable for sounds than for images, but here, too, we find similarities of process. Editing and mixing sound is as much a matter of discovery as it is of assembly. Especially for complex productions, sound needs to be experimented with; radio programs reveal their final forms as sound, not just words on paper.

There are key differences. Foremost is the freedom from convention. Take for example that most basic cinematic transitional device, the straight cut. The juxtaposition of shots is not only a way to change from one scene or image to the next; it is the language of film, imbued with history, theory, and tradition. There is no radio equivalent to the formal conventions of classic Hollywood styles. Each producer and each project must find its own techniques and structures to "make meaning" within the aural realm.

Production is only half the battle of independent mediamaking. Distribution on public radio is generally accomplished two ways: through a national network such as NPR or American Public Radio, or directly to individual stations. If NPR picks up a program by an independent, it carries the distribution and marketing costs. NPR shows have substantially larger carriage rates and audiences than most independents could hope to achieve on their own. The NPR news shows *All Things Considered* and *Morning Edition* acquire shorter, usually four-to-10 minute pieces, while other nationally syndicated programs specialize in business news (*Marketplace*, from Los Ange-

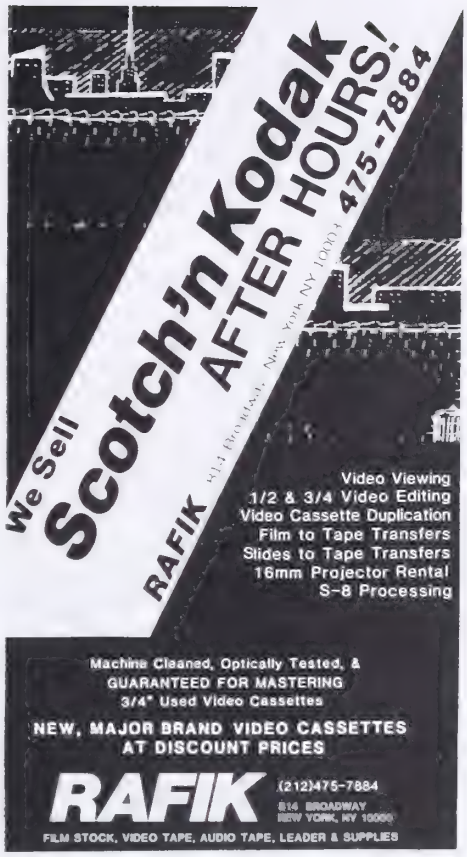
les), environmental news (*Living on Earth*, produced in Boston), and sound features on issues of concern to communities historically ignored by the media (*Crossroads*, from Miami). *Soundprint* and *Horizons* also accept proposals for half-hour programs and acquire completed documentaries. The submission process is based on a print model: you pitch a story to the program's editors; if they like it, they give the go-ahead. If they don't know your work, they will ask you to do it on spec, i.e. not commit to buying or using the piece until they hear it.

Many programs and series are successfully self-distributed, achieving carriage in upwards of 50 to 100 markets. The tools to convince individual radio stations to carry your program are the same as with public television: mailings, sample audition satellite feeds, and direct phone contacts. But here, too, producers of single programs and smaller series can have a tough time getting stations to squeeze them into tight schedules.

With independent media projects, fundraising is always an issue, and radio is no exception—it just requires a lot less money than film. Many local arts agencies don't get as many radio proposals as film or video, so the competition can be less fierce. On a national level, the CPB Radio Program Fund offers substantial funding mostly for larger projects: *Fresh Air with Terry Gross*, *Afropop*, and other series have each received upwards of $1-million.There is dissatisfaction with the CPB fund among independent radio producers who believe more money should be given to smaller projects—e.g., shorter series or even discreet half-hours productions—and works by "developing" producers.

Radio offers producers a practical opportunity to spin off inexpensive audio byproducts from their film/video projects. But it also affords a place to experiment with the relationship between sound and image. Sound storytellers have a different relationship with their audience than visual ones. The rapt listener who can't bear to leave his or her car until a documentary radio piece is over is in a very different situation than a captivated viewer in a film theater. The questions that interest film theoreticians—why is film pleasurable and what is the social significance of pleasure in cinema?—has not been asked so directly for radio or sound. With radio, producers can delve into this and a variety of other questions, such as: How does audio operate differently when there is or isn't an associated image track? In what ways is the intensely intimate experience of listening to radio different from the kaleidoscopic voyeurism of film viewing? Do certain films, historic periods, or particular filmmakers include more story information in soundtracks than others? Such questions are especially relevant as the boundaries between film and video, music, sound design, and radio become increasingly permeable.

Benjamin Shapiro is a filmmaker and regular National Public Radio contributor, based in New York.



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Domestic

ASPEN FILMFEST, Sept. 29-Oct. 3, CO. Celebrates "today's diverse & exciting ind. films" incl. feature, foreign, doc & short subject films. Features & shorts (under 10 min.) completed after June 1, 1992 eligible. Entry fee: $25. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: July 10. Contact: Susanne Hines/Mary Mullane, Aspen Filmfest, Independent Films, Box 8910, Aspen, CO 81612; (303) 925-6882; fax: 9570.

CENTRAL FLORIDA FILM FESTIVAL, Sept. 18-19, FL. Entries welcome for 11th annual competition showcase for independents and no-budgeters in the Orlando area. Screenings held at Orlando Museum of Art. Formats: 1/2", Hi8, super 8, 16mm & 8mm. Categories: Narrative, doc, animation, computer animation & experimental. Entry fee: $20. Deadline: August 21. Contact: Central Florida Film & Video Festival c/o Jason Neff, 15 1/2 N. Eola Dr., #5, Orlando, FL 32801; (407) 839-6045.

DANCE ON CAMERA FESTIVAL, November, NY. Producers & distributors of films & videos on all types of dance may submit to fest. Entries must not have been shown at previous Dance on Camera fests, produced after 1991, & have or about to have distributor. Entry fees: $15-$50, depending on length; DFA members receive 20% discount. Formats: 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Aug. 15. Contact: Susan Braun, executive director, Dance Films Association, Inc., 31 W. 21st St., 3rd fl., New York, NY 10011; (212) 727-0764.

INTERNATIONAL FILM & TELEVISION FESTIVAL OF NEW YORK, January, NY. Int'l awards competition for achievements in broadcast & non-broadcast media, incl. TV & cinema advertising & TV programming & promotion. Entries must have been produced, released or aired after Aug. 3, 1992. Competition cats: promotion spots/openings & IDs (eg., news promotion, entertainment program promotion, sports program promotion); TV news programs (eg., newscast doc/special, public affairs, news magazine) & inserts (eg., breaking news story, special report, human interest); TV doc & information programs (eg., arts, biography, cultural issues, environment/ecology, politics, science & technology); sponsored programming, TV entertainment programs, TV entertainment specials, children's programming, music videos. Craft cats in each competition cat. Entry fees: $100-$375. Format: 3/4" (1/2" or film not accepted). Deadline: Aug. 3 (programs), Sept. 13 (promotion spots). Contact: New York Festivals, 655 Ave. of the Americas, 2nd fl., New York, NY 10010; (914) 238-4481.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT MEDIA FESTIVAL, October, DC. Administered under auspices of Association for Educational Communications & Technology (AECT), fest was organized to recognize original student work. Entries must be under 7 min. & students must incl. documentation on how they created prod. 5 grade classifications (K-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12, college/university) in each of 4 media types (sequential still images, animation, computer-generated, live action). Cats incl. comedy, drama, news, doc, instructional, promotional, music videos, PSAs. Entries submitted directly to appropriate event chairperson (contact general chairperson for list). Format: 1/2". Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: Mark Bielak, general chairperson, Maine South High School, 1111 S. Dee Rd., Park Ridge, IL 60068.

PRIZED PIECES INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO COMPETITION, November 13, OH. Competition, now in 13th yr, honors excellence in TV & film prod. that affirms universal experience of Africans & African-Americans." Program cats incl. public affairs news; youthteens (programs designed specifically for youth); drama (Black people cast in primary & subordinate roles in stories that affirm universality of Black experience); doc; music videos; promotional shorts & content cat. shorts (programs between 3-20 min. which may be in any cat. excluding music videos). Special prizes incl. best African/Diaspora ind. producer; Oscar Micheaux Award (honoring African American media professionals whose works & spirit most closely embody those of Micheaux); best student filmmaker/videographer. Entries must not have been previously entered in competition, must conform to broadcast standards & must have aired, been exhibited or produced for broadcast between Sept. 1, 1992 & Aug. 1, 1993. Int'l entries by ind. producers from African countries eligible & must have been produced for exhibition or broadcast in preceding 3 yrs. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fees: $35 ind. producers; $60 all others. Deadline: July 15. Contact: National Black Programming Consortium, 929 Harrison Ave., Ste 101, Columbus, OH 43215; (614) 299-5355; fax: 4761.

VIRGINIA FESTIVAL OF AMERICAN FILM, Oct. 28-31, VA. Independent films are important part of this fest, now in 6th yr. Fest "provides filmmakers, scholars, students, perofrmers & public w/ unique, multidisciplinary look at American film: ind. screenings are followed by open discussions." Features, shorts & docs accepted. Eligibility limited to American films completed after Oct. 31, 1992. Fest also features events that honor history of American film. Entry fee: $30. Deadline: Aug. 1. Contact: Laura Oaksmith, director, Virginia Festival of American Film, P.O. Box 3697, 104 Midmont Lane, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA 22903; (804) 982-5277; fax: 5297.

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser, director of the FIVF Festival Bureau. Listings do not constitute an endorsement. Since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. In order to improve our reliability and make this column more beneficial to independents, we encourage all filmand videomakers to contact FIVF Festival Bureau with their personal festival experiences, positive and negative.

Foreign

AMASCULTURA INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL, Nov. 20-28, Portugal. All doc fest debuted in 1990. Focus this yr. will be on Native Americans. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Contact: Manuel Costa e Silva, fest director, Encontros Internationais de Cinema, Centro Cultural da Malaposta, Rua Angola-Olival Basto, 2675 Odivelas, Portugal; tel: 351 938 84 07; fax: 351 938 93 47.

AMSTERDAM INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FILM FESTIVAL, Dec. 8-15, The Netherlands. Now in 6th yr, this is one of faster growing int'l doc fests; about 40 docs are programmed in competition & nearly 100 in retros & series. Competition winner receives Joris Ivens Award ($6,000). Program also features "Top 10" program (where filmmaker, Dennis O'Rourke this yr, chooses his/her favorite docs) & seminars, workshops & talk shows. 25,000 attend. Video section will be inaugurated this yr. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". No entry fee. Deadline: Sept. 1. Contact: IDFA, Kleine-Gartmanplantsoen 10, 1017 rr Amsterdam, The Netherlands: tel: 31 20 627 3329; fax: 31 20 638 5388.

BAHIA INTERNATIONAL MARKET FOR INDEPENDENT FILM & VIDEO, Sept. 9-15, Brazil. Held in Salvador, Bahia during the 20th Jornada Internacional de Cinema da Bahia (which focuses on prods from Latin America, Portugal, Spain & Portuguese-speaking Africa); market's objective is to "create an alternative space for the commercialization & int'l distribution of experimental & ind. film & video prods. Films must be on 1/2", w/ max. length of 60 min. Entry fee: $20 (good for up to 3 works under 60 min.). Deadline: Aug. 15. Registration form to: Mercado Internacional de Film 7 Video Independiente, Av. Araujo Pinho, 32, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil CEP 40 110 150, tel: 55 71 336 9106; fax: 55 71 336 9299.

DANUBIALE INTERNATIONAL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, Sept. 6-12, Austria. Fest for noncommercial films held in Krems on Danube (70 km west of Vienna). Entries, not older than 2 yrs, are accepted in cats of nonprofessional prods & prods by film academies or their students. Awards: Danubiale medals in gold, silver & bronze as well as special prizes. Formats: 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2" (PAL only). Deadline: July 30. Contact: Danubiale Internationale Film und Videofesttage, Postlagernd, A-3504 Krems, Austria.

FILM + ARC INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL FOR FILM AND ARCHITECTURE, Dec. 2-5, Austria. The April *Independent* did not list the US contact for the fest: EBS Productions, 330 Rich St., San Francisco, CA 94107; (415) 495-2327; fax: 2381. Entry fee should be AS 500.

FLANDERS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL OF GHENT, October, Belgium. Audiences of over 50,000 annually attend fest, now celebrating its 20th yr, which focuses on "The Impact of Music in Film" & shows about 130 works. Films w/out Belgian distributor welcome. Fest is competitive, w/ competition focusing on film music (best film award of about $82,000). Sections: Official Section incl. Competition (Impact of Music on Film) which awards Best Film & Best Application of Music (Georges Delerve Award); Out of Competition; Country Focus; Film Spectrum (int'l films receiving Belgian premieres). Competing films must be at least 60 min. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm w/ optical or magnetic sound&/or Dolby, Dolby SR, THX, or CDs. Deadline entry forms: mid-August. Prints:October. Contact: Jacques Dubrulle, Int'l Flanders Film Festival-Ghent, 1104 Kortrijksesteenweg, B-9051 Ghent, Belgium; tel: (32) 9221-8946; fax: (32) 9221-9074.

ARNHEM AUDIO-VISUAL-EXPERIMENTAL FESTIVAL, Nov. 4-10, The Netherlands. 8th annual fest for emerging artists working in field of media arts. Programs

video, experimental film, performance, installations, concerts in electronic music, workshops & lectures. This edition will present "Special Feature USA", a program of work by young,, relatively unknown media artists from US. Fest reps will visit NY from 7/18-31 & San Francisco from 8/1-14 to meet artists & will be working w/ Kitchen, Drift Distribution, ArtCom. Deadline: July 18. Contact Chris Hoover, Drift Distribution, 611 Broadway, #742, New York, NY 10012; (212) 254-4118; fax: 254-3154. Address in Germany: International Audio Visual Experimental Festival, Box 307, 6800 AH Arnhem, The Netherlands; tel: 31 85 511 300; fax: 31 85 517681.

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Distribution

NEW DAY FILMS, coop. of ind. media producers w/ common vision, seeks new members w/ social issue docs for distrib. to nontheatrical US markets. Also consider distributing exceptional films & videos by nonmembers. Contact: New Day Films, 121 W. 27th St., Ste 902, New York, NY 10001; (212) 645-8548.

CS ASSOCIATES, w/ over 20 yrs experience, represents inds. in foreign & domestic TV & video markets. We seek new programs of all types. Send preview cassette to 102 E. Blithedale Ave., Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-6060.

ATA TRADING CORP, actively & successfully distributing for ind. filmmakers for over 50 yrs, seeks new features, shorts, docs, children's, music, etc. to present to the world. Contact us at (212) 594-6460.

INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF SHORT FILMS 1st & 2nd feature-length pkgs of live-action shorts currently touring N. America. Seeking films for subsequent compilations. For submission form, write: Andalusian Pictures, 1081 Camino del Rio S., #125, San Diego, CA 92108; (800) 925-CINE; fax: (619) 497-0811.

SEEKING NEW WORKS for educational & health care markets. Fanlight Productions distributes films/videos in areas of health, sociology, psychology, etc. Karen McMillen, Fanlight Prods, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130; (800) 937-4113.

VARIED DIRECTIONS, distributor of child abuse & health tapes, seeks socially important films/videos. Long & successful track record due to selectivity & attention to programs we choose. Contact: Joyce, 69 Elm St., Camden, ME 04843; (800) 888-5236.

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ALTERNATIVE FILMWORKS, experimental film distrib. seeks ind. film/video works, any length. No mainstream films. Send videotape copy to: alternative filmworks, Dept. IC, 259 Oakwood Ave., State College, PA 16803-1698; (814) 867-1528; fax: 9488.

CHIP TAYLOR COMMUNICATIONS, the best distributor, is always seeking the best productions. Send yours on VHS & we'll notify you w/in 7 days. Contact: CTC, 15 Spollett Dr., Derry, NH 03038.

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EXPERIENCED ASSOC. PRODUCER needed for low-budget NYC romantic comedy. Award-winning writer/dir. needs assistance writing business plan for private investors. Must have exp. w/mkt analysis. Some seed money in place. Some pay. Call Lee Sachs (212) 673-1917.

SCREENWRITER, NY-produced playwright seeks filmmaker to collaborate on comedy about exotic dancer/single parent. Woman's p.o.v. Send letter w/ your vision, work you like & resumé. Fundrasing exp. a +. J. Lois Diamond, 195 W. 10th St., #2C, New York, NY 10014.

INDEPENDENT LOW-BUDGET PRODUCER looking for fresh, original film script for late '93 shoot. Rom–

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PRODUCTION COMPANY seeks scripts for features and documentaries. Call (201) 222-1971.

AWARD-WINNING SCREENWRITER w/ major background in film prod. seeks angel to help jump-start his directing career. I have 3 great scripts, low-to-mid-budget. Contact: Kyle Michael Sullivan, 747 Micheltorena, #D, Los Angeles, CA 90026; (213) 661- 0774.

STORY & SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT. For more meaningful stories, call mythology & script consultant Geoffrey Hill, author of *Illuminating Shadows: The Mythic Power of Film*. Featured on BBC, E! & NPR. From initial idea to finished screenplay. (310) 271-7779.

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FILM EDITING SUITES for rent. Fully equipped rooms w/ 6- or 8-plate Steenbecks in luxury bldg. w/ terrace & 24-hr doorman. Midtown, 1 block from DuArt. Student rates. Please call Edward Deitch (914) 928-2682 or call the studio (212) 245-3395.

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FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars and workshops, an information clearinghouse, and a grant making program. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following agencies, foundations, and organizations: New York State Council on the Arts; National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency; John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation; Rockefeller Foundation; Consolidated Edison Company of New York; Beldon Fund; Edelman Family Fund.

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The Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers

When you join the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, you're doing something for yourself—and for others. Membership entitles you to a wide range of benefits. Plus, it connects you with a national network of independent producers. Adding your voice helps us all. The stronger AIVF is, the more we can act as advocate for the interests of independents like yourself—inside the corridors of Washington, with the press, and with others who affect our livelihoods.

8 Benefits of Membership

THE INDEPENDENT

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*. Published 10 times a year, the magazine is a vital source of information about the independent media field. Each issue helps you get down to business with festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and more. Plus, you'll find thought-provoking features, coverage of the field's news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters.

THE FESTIVAL BUREAU

AIVF maintains up-to-date information on over 650 national and international festivals, and can help you determine which are right for your film or video.

Liaison Service

AIVF works directly with many foreign festivals, in some cases collecting and shipping tapes or prints overseas, in other cases serving as the U.S. host to visiting festival directors who come to review work.

Tape Library

Members can house copies of their work in the AIVF tape library for screening by visiting festival programmers. Or make your own special screening arrangements with AIVF.

INFORMATION SERVICES

Distribution

In person or over the phone, AIVF can provide information about distributors and the kinds of films, tapes, and markets in which they specialize.

AIVF's Member Library

Our library houses information on distributors, funders, and exhibitors, as well as sample contracts, funding applications, budgets, and other matters.

SEMINARS

Our seminars explore current business, aesthetic, legal, and technical topics, giving independent producers a valuable forum to discuss relevant issues.

BOOKS AND TAPES

AIVF has the largest mail order catalog of media books and audiotaped seminars in the U.S. Our list covers all aspects of film and video production. And we're constantly updating our titles, so independents everywhere have access to the latest media information. We also publish a growing list of our own titles, covering festivals, distribution, and foreign and domestic production resource guides.

continued

Place Stamp Here

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ADVOCACY

Whether it's freedom of expression, public funding levels, public TV, contractual agreements, cable legislation, or other issues that affect independent producers, AIVF is there working for you.

INSURANCE

Production Insurance

A production insurance plan, tailor-made for AIVF members and covering public liability, faulty film and tape, equipment, sets, scenery, props, and extra expense, is available, as well as an errors and omissions policy with unbeatable rates.

Equipment Insurance

Equipment coverage for all of your equipment worldwide whether owned or leased.

Group Health, Disability, and Life Insurance Plans with TEIGIT

AIVF currently offers two health insurance policies, so you're able to find the one that best suits your needs.

Dental Plan

Reduced rates for dental coverage are available to NYC and Boston-area members.

DEALS AND DISCOUNTS

Service Discounts

In all stages of production and in most formats, AIVF members can take advantage of discounts on equipment rentals, processing, editing services, and other production necessities.

Nationwide Car Rentals

AIVF membership provides discounts on car rentals from major national rental agencies.

Mastercard Plan

Credit cards through the Maryland Bank are available to members with a minimum annual income of $18,000. Fees are waived the first year.

Facets Multimedia Video Rentals

AIVF members receive discounts on membership and mail-order video rentals and sales from this Chicago-based video rental organization.

Join AIVF Today...

Five thousand members strong, the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers has been working for independent producers—providing information, fighting for artists' rights, securing funding, negotiating discounts, and offering group insurance plans. Join our growing roster.

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Conferences ▪ Seminars

CALIFORNIA LAWYERS FOR THE ARTS' Los Angeles Workshops: Music Publishing & Licensing, July 6; Writing for Television, July 20; Legalities of Operating a Nonprofit, Aug. 3; Licensing Art & Design, Aug. 17. For reservations call: (310) 395-8893. Oakland Workshops: Collaboration Agreements for Creative Works, July 14; Legal Issues for Film & Video, July 28; Corporations & Partnerships, Aug. 11; From Demo Tapes to Recording Contracts, Aug. 25. Call (510) 444-6351. San Francisco Workshops: Law of Publicity & Privacy, July 21; Film Distribution, Aug. 4; Overview of Patent Law, Aug. 18. Call (415) 775-7200.

COLLEGE ART ASSOCIATION's annual conference, Feb. 1994, seeks proposals/presentations on ind. video from lesbian & gay mediamakers, scholars, historians & critics. Panels will combine papers, presentations & excerpts from prods, mapping medium's diversity & various roles it has played in lesbian & gay self-representation. Possible themes incl.: how ind. video has (or has not) functioned as bridge between gender, race, ethnicity & class w/in community; ind. lesbian & gay video's distinct relationship w/ institutional art video & queer film; the future of lesbian & gay ind. prod. Submit outlines, proposals, etc., to: Jane Cottis/John Di Stefano, 328 Museum Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90065.

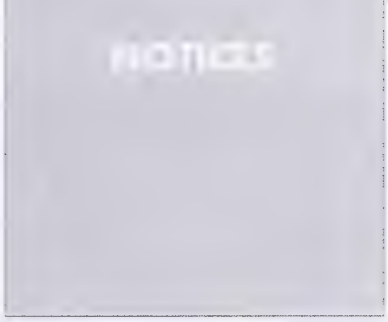
FILM ARTS FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars covering a wide range of topics, from 16mm film & video prod. to fundraising, distribution, screen-writing, special effects & guest lectures. Technical workshops are small, hands-on; all are taught by professionals in the field. For info, contact: FAF, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA, 94103; (914) 552-8760.

INQUEERY/INTHEORY/INDEED, 6th annual North American conference on lesbian, gay & bisexual studies, Nov. 1994, IA. This nat'l conference, 1st called in 1987 at Yale University, has grown from 300 to 3,000 participants. Persons interested in submitting papers, refereeing, adding name to mailing list, exhibiting work at or covering conference should contact conference chair, Greeta Patel, (319) 335-3555 or write 1994 Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual conference steering committee, c/o WRAC, 310 Madison St., University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242.

MANHATTAN NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK (MNN) offers workshops throughout yr. designed to train indivs in skills necessary to produce & edit videotape. Six-wk. basic camcorder workshops: Aug.3-Sept. 7; Sept 14-Oct. 19; Oct. 26-Nov. 30. Contact: MNN, 10th fl., 110 East 23rd St., New York, NY 10010; (212) 260-2670.

MONTAGE 93: Int'l Festival of the Image celebrates fusion of art & tech & explores future of visual communications, July 11-Aug. 7, NY. Exhibitions, trade show, lectures, symposia & arts performances. Call for info: (800) 724-4332.

SOUTHEASTERN MEDIA INSTITUTE, July 24-August 6, sponsored by South Carolina Arts Commission Media Arts Center, offers intensive professional media workshops in cinematography, video prod., video editing, directing & producing. Weekend seminars include scriptwriting, film criticism, low-budget narratives, grants for film/video & producing the personal doc. Campus housing available. For brochure, contact: S. Carolina Arts Commission Media Arts Center, 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201; (803) 734-8696.



Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length. Deadlines for Notices will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., August 8 for the October issue). Send to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

Films ▪ Tapes Wanted

ACADEMIC STUDY seeks films, videos & photographs for research & eventual doc on women artists' image of self. Contact: Julie Simon, University of Baltimore, Maryland 21212; (410) 234-3924; fax: (410) 539-3714.

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable TV System, seeks works by ind. video & filmmakers for access airing. BRONXNET produces programs & facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, (718) 960-1180.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video art interstitials to play btwn alternative music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTRAL AMERICAN NEWS PROJECT seeks indivs to produce news & public affairs pieces for monthly access show on Central America. Contribute footage or contacts w/ people in CA w/ film or video equip. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St., Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Contact: Cine Accion, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks works on seniors, disabled, children. Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Laura Greenfield, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (213) 458-8590.

COMEDY CENTRAL seeks comedic student/ind. films & videos up to 3 min. to air on its flagship program, Short Attention Span Theater. Must have broadcast rights. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes to: Josh Lebowitz, HBO Downtown Prods, 120 E. 23rd St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10010; (212) 512-8851.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO, organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange, seeks works by Latin American and US Latino ind. producers. To include work in this resource or for info., contact: Karen Ranucci, (212) 463-0108 or write IMRE, 124 Washington Place, New York, NY 10014.

DEEP DISH TV seeks tapes on healthcare for '94 season. Deadline: Aug. 1993. Contact: Cynthia Lopez, programming director, Deep Dish TV, 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012; (212) 473-8933.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" Beta & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Tanya Steele, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Please contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Ronhert Park, CA 94928.

FEEDBACK seeks independently produced 3/4" VHS or Hi8 work for anthology cable access show produced by Center for New TV (CNTV) & N.A.M.E. Gallery. Send SASE. Contact: Video Committee, N.A.M.E. Gallery, 700 N. Carpenter, Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 226-0671.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on varied subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, Ste 4768, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10112.

GREEN COMMUNICATIONS seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Send tape to: 1437 7th St., Ste 305, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (301) 576-6680.

I WITNESS VIDEO, a weekly, 1-hr. program that features nonfiction segments by both professional and amateur videographers, is looking for extraordinary or unexpected moments, compelling video journals that document story of event/individual, or other unusual perspectives made available thru video technology. Call (800) 558-4336 if interested in submitting tapes. Tapes can be Fed Exed at show's expense.

OPEN CITY cable series invites indivs., groups & orgs. to submit proposals to produce new cable programming, to air as part of "Artwaves," Hallwalls Contemporary Art Centers' weekly cable access program. Provides honoraria, prod. & postprod. facilities & technical assistance for indivs to produce programming of interest to diverse urban & rural communities in Western New York. Submissions should include 1-page project description, time-frame for prod. & postprod. & applicant's technical experience. Three projects will be selected. Applicants must be residents of Erie, Niagara, Allegany, Cattaragus, or Chautauqua counties. Student projects not eligible. Contact: Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center, 700 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14202; (716) 854-5828.

PACIFIC ARTS seeks selected domestic & foreign ind. projects—narrative, animation, doc, experimental & performance—to air on wkly cable access show. Any theme, any length. Projects credited. Submit 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Pacific Arts, Box 533, Farmington, MI 48332-0533.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests noncommercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson,

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program coordinator, Channel 13, Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

STONEPINE PRODS seeks submissions of quality, full-length scripts. All genres considered. Contact: 10 Universal City Plaza, Ste 1077A, Universal City, CA 91608-1097; (818) 505-3500.

TV 2000, TV pilot to be produced this summer, seeks new videos that convey positive images for teens. All genres (art, music & film on video). Send letter of permission to air material & video to: Daryl Grant, Box 627, Ansonia Station, New York, NY 10023.

VENEZUELAN FILMS & VIDEOS sought for inclusion in travelling retrospective of Venezuelan cinema. Any genre, format or date. New feature work also of interest. For info, contact: Karen Schwartzman, 78 Jane St., Upper Apt., New York, NY 10014; tel/fax: (212) 691-6646.

VIDEOFORUM II (Latino issue) seeks information ASAP on ind. films/ videos by &/or about Latinos in the US for videography sponsored by National Video Resources & MacArthur Foundation Library Video Project. Send info by July 30 to Marie Nesthus, *Videoforum* editor, National Video Resources, 73 Spring St., Ste 606, New York, NY 10012.

VIRTUAL FOCUS seeks submissions of doc, narrative & art videos for monthly public screenings. Send VHS copies to: Virtual Focus, 6019 Sunset Blvd., Ste 133, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 250-8118.

WYOU-TV, cable access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for wkly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

Opportunities ▪ Gigs

DYKE TV, new wkly public access program on Manhattan's cable Channel 34, seeks production team. Positions incl.: fundraiser; PR/audience development; calendar producer; "I Was a Lesbian Child" producer; news staff incl. producer, writer/researcher, camerapersons. Contact: Linda Chapman (212) 343-9335.

IMAGE Film/Video Center, one of southeast's premiere media arts orgs, seeks self-motivated & entrepreneurial executive director. Responsibilities incl.: overseeing programming, effecting public relations, fundraising, supervising staff & managing organization. Min. req.: BA in media arts or related field, demonstrated success in grant writing & fundraising for the arts, proven leadership & effective personnel management. Send salary history & resumé to: Image Film/Video Center, 75 Bennett St. NW, Ste M-1, Atlanta, GA 30309.

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGE BROADCASTERS seeks ambitious college grad for 2-6 yr. position as executive director/CEO supervising small, nonprofit corporation. Requirements: BA, 1 yr. postgrad management & fundraising experience, knowledge of professional/commercial media, experience in student-run radio/TV, writing/communications skills, organizational & supervisory skills, accounting/budgeting experience, computer literacy, marketing experience & ability to conceive, sell & execute coventure projects. Duties include generating funds via nonprofit development fundraising and conceiving earned income projects, consult/refer member staitons seeking help, supervise association director in coordinating national conference, serve as liaison to exec. advisory &

trustee boards, coordinate NACB appearances, serve as spokesperson for outside media. Deadline for appl.: July 31. Send resumé w/ cover. Please discuss specific ideas to increase funding. Start date: Sept. 7. Send to: NACB, 71 George St., Box 1824, Providence, RI 02912-1824. Call Glenn Gutmacher (401) 863-2225.

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FULBRIGHT PROFESSIONAL FILM & TV FELLOWSHIP offers professional mediamakers an opportunity to pursue extended work in the UK in 1994-95. Minimum 3 yrs professional experience & US citizenship required. Applicants design program of creative work, combining professional & artistic work w/ contributions to community (e.g., workshops, lectures, etc.). Proposals of a purely academic nature ineligible. Awards £12,000 & travel expenses for 6-9 mo. stay. Deadline: Aug. 1. For appl., contact: (202) 686-7878 & leave message. For info, contact: Dr. Karen Adams (202) 686-6245 or Ms. Jane Mangan (202) 686-6242 or write to UK Film & TV Fulbright Award, CIES, 3007 Tilden St., NW, Ste 5M, Box F-UKF, Washington, DC 20008-3009.

MEDIA ALLIANCE Media Arts Fellowship Program offers 3 $5,000 fellowships to emerging artists in media—film, video & related electronic arts. Applicants must be indiv. media artists, age 30 or under, who are residents of New York State based in NYC during fellowship period (Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 1994), economically disadvantaged & have completed college or formal training. Artists of color encouraged to apply. Deadline: Oct. 1. For more info., contact: Media Alliance, c/o Thirteen/WNET, 356 West 58th St., New York, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

MEDIA CENTER FOR VISUAL STUDIES WORKSHOP's 1-mo. residencies mentioned in the May 1993 issue of *The Independent* will not be offered this year.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES (NEH) offers study grants for humanities teachers w/ heavy teaching loads & limited opportunities for professional development. The $3,000 grants provide 6 wks of support during summer '94 to undertake F/T humanities study. For appl. or guidelines, contact: NEH Study Grants, Rm 316, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8463.

NATIONAL VIDEO RESOURCES' (NVR) Independent Distributor Assistance Program awards grants of up to $15,000 to profit & nonprofit distributors in areas of market research, technical improvement & business/marketing consultancies. Deadline: Sept. 24, 1993. For guidelines, contact: NVR, 73 Spring St., Ste 606, New York, NY 10012; (212) 274-8080; (212) 274-8081, fax.

PENNSYLVANIA HUMANITIES COUNCIL supports humanities projects throughout state. Strong PA connection required, either in subject matter or producer residence. Preliminary proposal drafts 6-8 weeks in advance of deadline recommended. Deadline: Oct. 1. For appl., contact: PHC, 320 Walnut St., Ste 305, Philadelphia, PA 19106-3892; (215) 925-1005.

UCROSS FOUNDATION offers artists 2- to 8-wk. residencies at foot of Big Horn Mts in Wyoming. Appls welcome from artists in all disciplines. Deadlines: Oct. 1 for Jan.-May session; March 1 for August-December session. Room, board & studio space provided free of charge. For appl, contact: Executive director, Ucross Foundation, 2836 US Hwy 1416 East, Clearmont, Wyoming 82835; (307) 737-2291.



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MEMBERABILIA

Congratulations to AIVF members who received 1993 **John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation** Fellowships in film and video: documentarian filmmaker Alan Berliner and video artists Jeanne C. Finley and Mimi Pickering.

Kudos to member John G. Hanhardt, film and video curator at the Whitney Museum of American Art, who received a 1993 **Peter Norton Family Foundation** Curator's Grant to recommend artworks for purchase by the Whitney collection.

The **Paul Robeson Fund** for Independent Media of the **Funding Exchange** has awarded 1993 grants to the following AIVF members: J.T. Takagi for *Faithful Daughter*; Pam Walton for *Family Values*; Jonathan Lee for *Fear of Disclosure: Asian & Pacific Islanders/HIV/AIDS*; *I'm You...You're Me* by Debra Levine and Catherine Saalfield; Renee Tajima for *La Reunion*; Vivian Kleiman for *My Body's My Business*; and Calogero Salvo for *Mama, I Have Something to Tell You*, which received the Ray Navarro Memorial grant. Heather Dew Oaksen was one of three winners of the **James D. Phelan Art Awards in Video**. Congratulations to all!

Kudos to Ohio-based member Wendy Weinberg, whose first film *Beyond Imagining: Margaret Anderson & the Little Review* was nominated for a 1993 **Academy Award** in the short documentary category. *Beyond Imagining* is distributed by Women Make Movies.

William Garcia's film *A Day at a Time* received a Golden Apple Award in the Human Relations: Developmental Disabilities category of the **National Educational Film & Video Festival** and a Blue Ribbon in the **American Film & Video Festival**. Sian Evans' *Home Is Where the Heart Is* was awarded first prize in the experimental documentary category of the 1993 **Atlanta Film & Video Festival**.

Michael Seitzman's *Fishy Love*, about a man and his harmonica-playing goldfish, was recently featured in the **Washington, DC International Film Festival** at the Hirschorn Museum.

Mara Alper was guest speaker at a symposium on video dance and an invited guest in Düsseldorf, Germany, for the screening of her video art *Silent Echoes* at the Folkwang Museum as part of the **Second European Film and Video Festival**.

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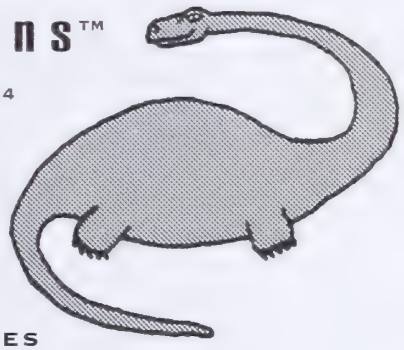
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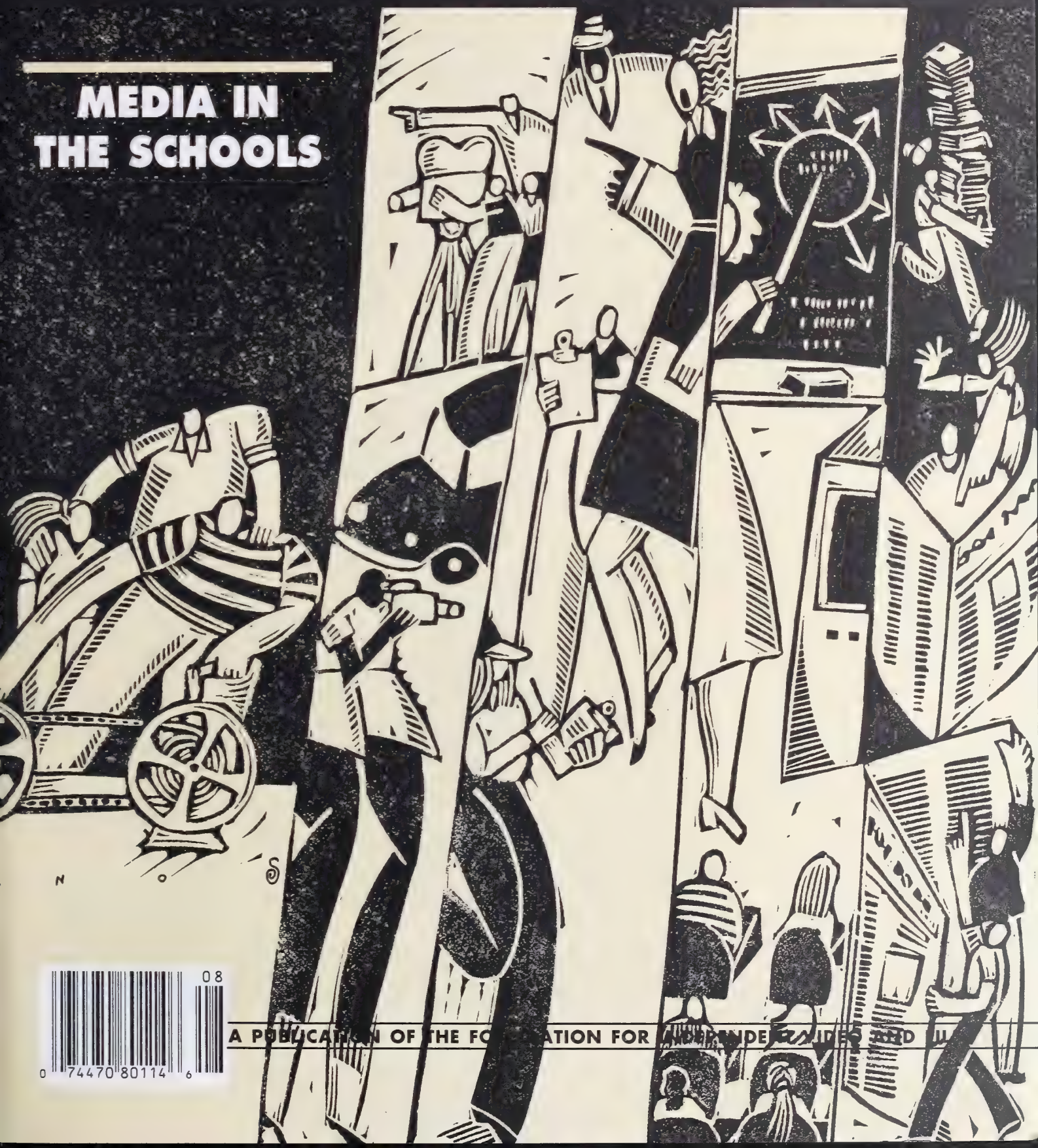
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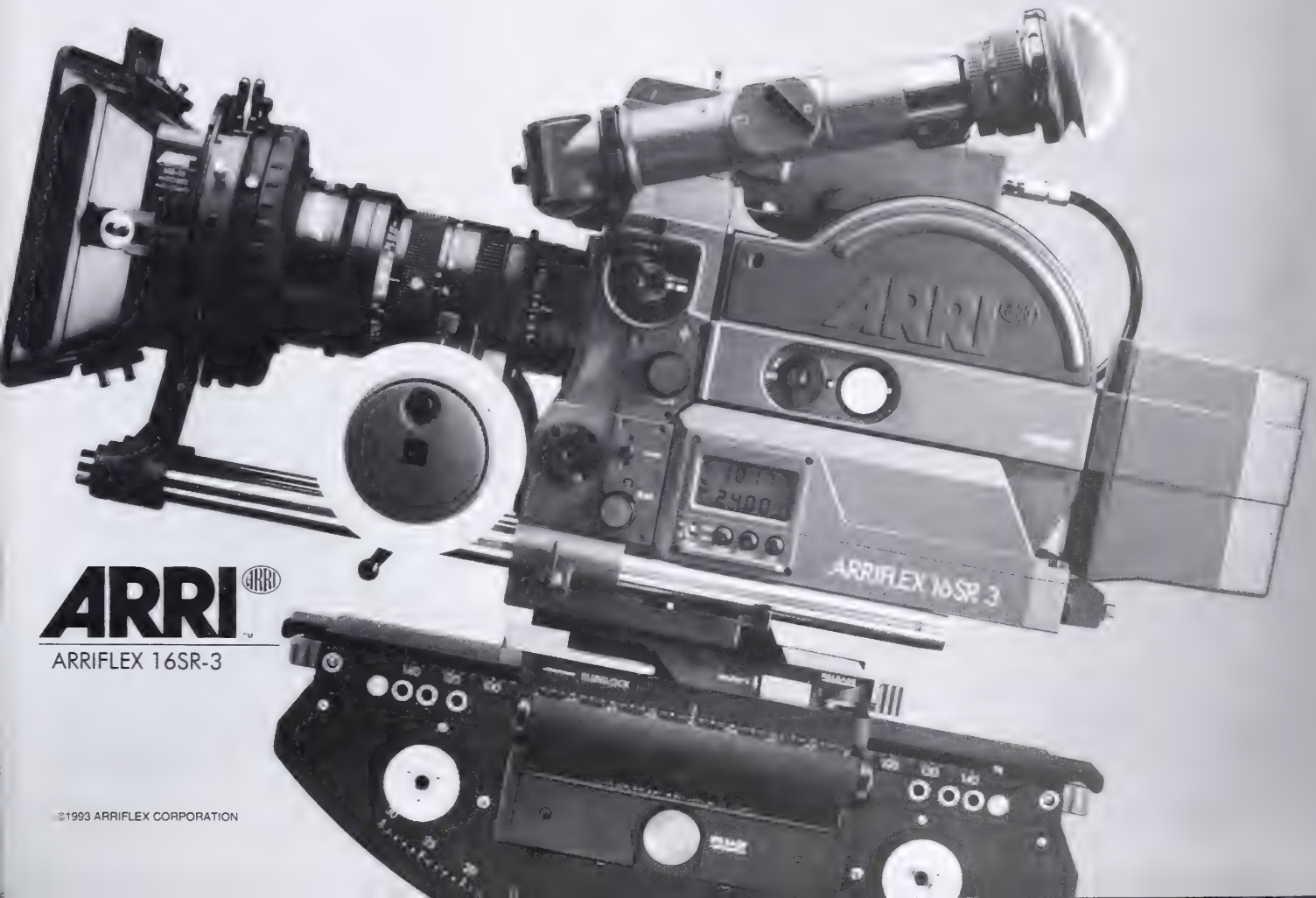
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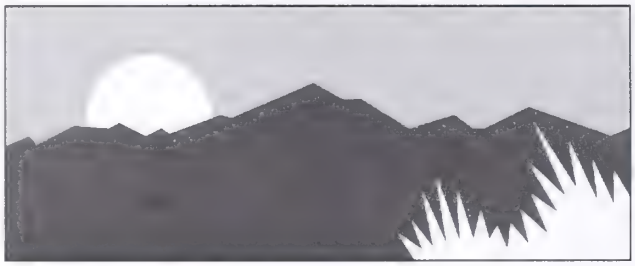


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MICKEY, MINNIE, AND MIRAMAX

Now that Disney has acquired the independent distributor, could its autonomy be in jeopardy?





Will the Brothers Weinstein be dwarfed by Disney or will the partnership have a Hollywood ending? (L-R) Tom Weinstein, Jeffrey Katzenberg, and Harvey Weinstein.

Courtesy Walt Disney Company and the Disney Channel.

The world of independent film production and distributon entered a new era last May when the Walt Disney Company purchased the Miramax Film Corporation for a reported $60 to $65 million. Now that the initial press flurry surrounding the announcement has subsided, the question at hand is how the symbiosis of a powerful Hollywood studio and the New York-based independent outfit will affect other independents, and indeed, how Miramax itself—known for its aggressive marketing of independent and specialty films and for nonconformist creative decisions—will be transformed at any time in the near term. While it still may be too soon to tell if Miramax is living up to its promise of "complete autonomy" from Disney, as announced at a press conference on May 2 by Miramax co-chairmen Harvey and Bob Weinstein, a number of observers in the independent industry have their own take on this sea-change.

Seth Willenson, executive vice president of distribution at I.R.S. Media, expressed his approval of the new arrangement. "I think the more successful independent movies that there are out there, and the more successful those movies are through all the pieces of the distribution chain, the more successful it is for everybody," he said in a recent interview. "I think it's going to increase the video value and awareness in the video industry of [independent] product, and I think that it's going to benefit everybody."

The reaction from Fine Line president Ira Deutchman to the Disney purchase was mixed. "The honest truth is that I don't think it's going to affect companies like ours at all," Deutchman said. Conversely, at a panel of young independent directors held recently in New York, critic Roger Ebert said that "New Line/Fine Line could be the next subject of a bidding war" in a world where everyone has his or her price.

Deutchman believes that Miramax will probably not swerve in terms of creative decision making, yet he allows that Miramax's increased bankability will be key for its survival. "I believe in a market as risky as the specialized film business is, to be part of a larger organization that has the wherewithal to withstand the ups and downs is the best way to survive." As for maintaining absolute autonomy from a studio largely known for producing family entertainment, versus Miramax's more adult fare, Deutchman says, "Disney knew what they were buying when they bought it, and it's hard for me to believe that they would have spent that kind of money if they weren't expecting [Miramax] to be exactly what they are."

Miramax produces and/or distributes an average of 18 to 22 films a year, according to Jerry Rich, senior vice president of Miramax's marketing department. Those figures are not expected to change in the near future. As for Prestige Films, the specialized film label under the Miramax umbrella, Rich says the label will continue to exist, "and when a property comes along that fits under the Prestige image, it will certainly be released under Prestige." He insists that nothing much has changed since the deal was announced in *Variety* on May 3. "I've got to tell you," Rich says, "being at Miramax before and after the acquisition, unless somebody told me the company was sold, you wouldn't know it from the way business is conducted."

"I think it's a vote of confidence for the business we're in," Ira Deutchman adds. "It's good to have people aggressively trying to bring audiences to different kinds of movies."

But Jeff Lipsky, cofounder of October Films, says he doesn't think the Disney-Miramax union will affect the independent film community "one iota. It's a non-story." Lipsky does acknowledge one change, however. "Harvey and Bob Weinstein will be able to afford to eat at better restaurants."

Some independent filmmakers are less sanguine about the buyout, however. In the *Hollywood Reporter*, Allen Hughes, codirector of *Menace II Society*, said the Disney purchase will ultimately "destroy independent filmmaking. Would Disney have allowed *The Crying Game*? Take that kind of a chance? This drastically changes the face of independent film."

Independent film labels have been bought or founded by larger corporations in the past, as in the case of Sony Classics or Gramercy Pictures, a joint venture of PolyGram and Universal, but this is the first time a major independent, if that isn't an oxymoron, has come under the banner of an older Hollywood mainstay. Said Miramax's Jerry Rich, "From a corporate image standpoint, I think Miramax releases quality programming and quality films, which is consistent with the Disney philosophy."

JORDAN ELGRABLY

Jordan Elgrably is currently completeing the screenplays The Sunday Man *and* The Port Tropique, *an adaptation of the Barry Gifford novel.*

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RIGHTS & WRONGS PLEASES SOME, RILES OTHERS

Rights & Wrongs, PBS's human rights-oriented news magazine by Globalvision, the makers of *South Africa Now*, has covered neo-Nazis in Hungary, a dam project in Brazil, environmental dumping in Haiti, skinheads in Czechoslovakia, and economic injustice in Mexico—all for approximately $50,000 an episode. Making ample use of video diaries by independent filmmakers in oppressed areas, *Rights & Wrongs* aims to supplement in a series format what executive producer Danny Schechter calls PBS's "one-shot" opportunities for independent filmmakers. "Independent filmmaking has been ghettoized," he says. "When [independents] do something, it's a 'point of view.'"

The U.S. has not been neglected in the show's coverage: indigenous and gay rights have been touched on, and in one episode President Bill Clinton was given poor marks in a human rights "report card" of his first 100 days. But so far, *Rights & Wrongs*' biggest scoops have come from overseas. It televised segments of Barbara Trent's *The Panama Deception* and Iris Kung's *Escape from China* before anyone else and has aired video diaries from Black Box in Hungary and countless other amateur witnesses to human rights offenses. "When we first started using [amateur video on *South Africa Now*] everybody said, 'It doesn't meet broadcast technical specifications,'" says Rory O'Connor, Globalvision's president. "Three years later, when the Rumanian revolution came, all of a sudden nobody was talking about technical specs."

Schechter had worked for ABC's *20/20* and O'Connor for CBS's *48 Hours* until 1987 when they formed their own company, Globalvision. After completing 156 episodes of *South Africa Now* in 1991, they hoped to expand the program into a human rights magazine, but it took two years to gather $750,000 in grants from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur, Body Shop, and Diamond Foundations—enough for 13 episodes. After viewing two separate *Rights & Wrongs* pilots, PBS turned down the show for the main feed because, Schechter recalls, "human rights was not considered to be a sufficient organizing principle for a television series—as opposed to, say, cooking."

Since then, *Rights & Wrongs* has secured *MacNeil/Lehrer*'s Charlayne Hunter-Gault as host, attracted accomplished independents like Ilan Ziv, Jeff O'Connor, and Chuck Olin, and even received a tentative interview commitment from Bill Clinton. The American Programming Service distributes the show to 85 PBS stations. Many of them are secondary stations in their market; others carry it at poor time slots. Says Michael Radner, a lawyer for the Center for Constitutional Rights who has appeared on the program, "In San Francisco, it's on at 1:00 in the



The subject matters: (L-R) Daniel Schechter, producer of the human rights series *Rights & Wrongs*, poses with U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and the show's anchorwoman, Charlayne Hunter-Gault.

Courtesy Rights & Wrongs

morning. Chicago is the only place with a decent time [10:00 p.m. Fridays]. You would have thought that, with someone like Charlayne Hunter-Gault, they would have at least given it a slightly better time slot." Abroad, it's a different story: the program is being broadcast twice a week in primetime in 29 countries via Superchannel.

"We think what we're doing is important not just for PBS, but for independents also, to get a sense that we can mainstream material," says Schechter. But while critics have praised the show's ability to touch on subjects not covered by the networks, some on the left take issue with the program's detached treatment of human rights. After the third episode, Ingrid Arnesen, a former CBS news producer, resigned as *Rights & Wrongs*' senior producer, complaining that too many U.S.-based groups like Human Rights Watch were consulted for stories when more involved grassroots activists were available. "I think [Schechter and O'Connor] felt they would be labeled as leftists and radical, and would therefore lose their credibility with human rights organizations," she says. "They're politically conscious, but they don't take a stance." Schechter, for his part, says, "We cover Human Rights Watch, but we also are talking with the human rights council in Kosovo, Yugoslavia. I think that if we came on the air with an agenda, waving a flag, it would turn people off."

Whatever they've done has kept the show afloat: after over half the episodes aired, WNET stepped in as a coproducer, guaranteeing rebroadcast of the original episodes ("reversioned" when necessary) and offering fundraising assistance for a new season. "It's the flagship PBS station, but there are some stations that are jealous of WNET because it's one of the leading producing stations," says Schecter. "There's a lot of horse-trading that goes on within the system: you take my show, I'll take your show. They're going to be talking to other stations in the system about it."

ROBERT KOLKER

Robert Kolker is a freelance writer living in Manhattan.

NJ MEDIA ARTS INSTITUTE TO OPEN IN SPRING

Though it has over 41,000 residents and hosts the sprawling campuses of Rutgers University, the central New Jersey city of New Brunswick has had no major commercial movie house for decades and no venue for experimental and alternative films since 1979, when the tiny Art Cinema became an X-rated grind house with midnight screenings of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show*. The wrecking ball took care of that in 1986.

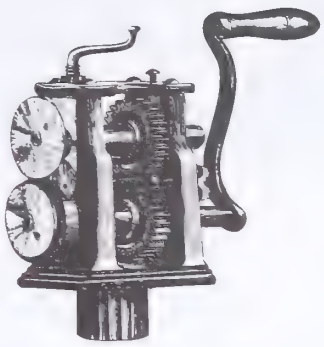
From this unlikely terrain, Rutgers alumnus and independent filmmaker Al Nigren has been nurturing an increasingly ambitious film series that draws patrons from all over the state. And now his Rutgers Film Coop has spawned an even more ambitious undertaking: the New Jersey Media Arts Institute, the nucleus of which Nigrin hopes to develop into a media center encompassing equipment access, a film and print library, and screening space.

Nigrin, 35, is now pulling together grants and funding for the institute's first programs: a series of workshops on media law and grantsmanship, planned for the spring. Also on the agenda is a beginner's workshop in animation to be led by Emily Hubley, whose short animation works include *Enough* and *Blakeball*.

Though the institute's events and services will at first be scattered among three city locations, Nigrin is negotiating with the New Brunswick Cultural Center for office space in a former YMCA building that also houses one of the city's two resident theater companies.

The office space will give the nascent institute room for a screening facility and storage for its growing collection of film scripts, videotapes, and prints. An anonymous benefactor has already donated a substantial collection of media arts periodicals from 1973 to the present, with titles ranging from *Camera Obscura* and *Jump Cut* to *Film Comment* and *Sight and Sound*.

"All of these things are falling into place," Nigrin says. "The next year is going to be kind of hellish, 'cause I've got to keep all these things flowing in the same direction. We're going to



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Al Nigren, founder of the New Jersey Media Arts Institute, continues to broaden cultural opportunities in the Garden State despite a funding drought.

Photo: Irene Fizer, courtesy Light Pharmacy Films.

move slowly. Media centers have to be built from the ground up."

Nigrin understands the principle of slow, steady growth, having witnessed the flameout of two overly ambitious media operations in New Jersey, one of which, Mediamix, was close enough to scorch him. As a cofounder of that group, Nigrin says, he learned a lot about how not to do things. Trips across the country to preside over screenings of his own films have also given Nigrin a chance to see how other people do things—and how he might do them better.

"I've spent the last two years doing analysis, visiting 25 different media centers," Nigrin says and adds that many had expanded too rapidly for their own good.

In contrast, the development of the Film Coop is a model for balancing artistic ambition with fiscal prudence. Begun in 1983 with $300 of Nigrin's own money and a basement classroom for screening space, the co-op is wrapping up a 1993 season of 80 events, including regular double features, ancillary film series devoted to special topics such as Malcolm X and images of the Middle Ages, the annual United States Super 8 Film and Video Festival, and a screening of selections from the Black Maria Festival. The co-op's budget has swelled to $47,000, much in in-kind services from the university, and it commands a 31-member volunteer staff. This past summer marked the beginning of an association with the city's reopened State Theatre, a 1920s vintage space with 1,850 seats and facilities for 35mm projection.

For his fledgling media institute, Nigrin is shooting for a $500,000 budget and a governing board stocked with useful, well-connected people. The coming year will see some extensive bridge building, he says.

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them," Nigrin says. "Too many nonprofits set themselves up as mini-Hollywoods, and that doesn't work. You have to check your egos at the door."

STEVEN HART

Steven Hart is a freelance writer and journalist based in Montclair, NJ. He has written for the New York Times *and the* Philadelphia Inquirer, *among other publications.*

A&E MAKES HISTORY WITH H-TV

Newshounds sniff out CNN. Rock music groupies turn to MTV. But lovers of American and world history have had no cable channel to call their own. Until now.

The Arts & Entertainment Channel recently announced the fall 1994 launch of History TV (or, in cablespeak, H-TV). The 24-hour flexible basic cable network will feature historical documentaries as well as historical movies and miniseries. In its first year, 45 percent of H-TV's programming will come from the acquisition of documentaries, archival films, movies, and miniseries and 35 percent from Arts & Entertainment's library. The other 20 percent will be commissioned by H-TV and, according to Charlie Maday, A&E's VP of historical programming, the network is looking to work with independent documentarians who have "carved a niche in an historical area."

With an estimated start-up cost of $20 million, H-TV "will probably offer less per project than Arts & Entertainment does," says Maday. Like A&E, H-TV will put up 50 percent of the funding for coproduction projects, which Maday estimates will have budgets ranging from $50,000 to $100,000. Most one-hour documentaries, however, will fall within the $60,000 to $80,000 range.

Maday says the network wants to work with independents around the country, and adds that H-TV offers a real opportunity to explore regional history. Although the network primarily is soliciting ideas for series with the themes of American or world history, there may also be an opportunity, albeit lesser, for one-shot programs, especially those that could be grouped thematically. He adds that the network will not feature "all war programming," but a mix of general historical stories and general interest stories.

H-TV's primetime programming schedule will include a Monday-through-Friday strip of three series: *History Alive*, an hour each weeknight including original and exclusive documentary fare; *Movies in Time*, a roster of oustanding motion picture and miniseries set in an historical context; and *War Chronicles*.

The network, says Maday, is currently planning "a major multi-part coproduction to launch the service." But, he says, H-TV plans to work with someone who is already bringing resources to the project.

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Arts & Entertainment will launch History TV in fall 1994 and the cable network's search is on for documentary series and coproduction opportunities with independents.

Courtesy Arts & Entertainment Network



Maday emphasizes that H-TV will be an entertainment, not an educational network, which will incorporate historical movies and miniseries into its program mix. For the first year at least, however, Maday will not commission any coproductions for either movies or miniseries but will rely on acquisitions. The network is also acquiring completed documentary series and Maday encourages independent producers to send finished projects to H-TV.

He pinpoints productions filmed or taped during the U.S.'s Bicentennial year that have since "disappeared" as one type of program or series the network may be interested in acquiring.

By 1999, the network's goal is to reach 25 million subscribers and Maday doesn't perceive the recent Federal Court decision to uphold must-carry as a threat. "The situation with must carry [which requires cable systems to carry local broadcast stations] is cloudy," he says. "The difficulty in launching a new service is channel capacity and by 1994, that obstacle should be overcome."

Within three years, H-TV hopes to "provide over 50 percent original programming," says Maday. Competitors on the horizon could include The History Network, a Washington, DC-based network that plans to launch as an advertiser-supported basic service in summer 1994. Dave Glick, one of The History Network's cofounders, says that, like H-TV, his network will acquire product (primarily half-hour and one-hour documentaries) in its first year and will have a substantial coproduction budget in its second. As to how The History Network will differ from H-TV, Glick says the focus will be more on contemporary history, from the 1960s onward.

In coming years, both networks will create opportunities for independents looking to showcase completed works or co-finance future projects. The rest, as they say, is history.

Direct inquiries to H-TV, 235 East 45th St., New York, NY 10017; treatments may be sent to Michael du Monceau, c/o The History Network, 1133 21st St., Suite M-500, Washington, DC 20036.

MICHELE SHAPIRO

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of The Independent.

MICHAEL MOORE STRUTS HIS STUFF ON NBC

TV Nation, a one-hour special created by the director of *Roger & Me,* will air on NBC this fall. Produced with a top-notch independent crew, Moore's first effort for network television is witty, entertaining, and sarcastic, much in the style of his previous efforts.

Top level NBC executives enthusiastically screened the pilot in May, but, citing the abundance of magazine-style shows already locked into the fall lineup, did not offer Moore a weekly time slot. Instead, NBC primetime is betting on series like *The Mommies* and *Saved by the Bell* to attract advertising revenues and a hearty Nielsen share. The network plans to air the pilot this season as a special and has already commissioned Moore to create a second one-hour special.

The idea for the pilot came about when Moore was shopping his screenplay *Canadian Bacon* around Hollywood. Tristar Television approached him and asked if he had ever thought of doing something for television. Moore created *TV Nation*, a cross between *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men* and *Late Night with David Letterman.* In *Roger & Me*, Moore illustrated how big business makes decisions that affect real people. Now *TV Nation* shows how average people adjust and adapt to their economic environs.

The show, like any news magazine, aims to be factual. Yet *TV Nation* falls under NBC's entertainment rather than news division. After the network approved the initial concept, Moore was given free reign to produce the pilot in his rib-poking, thought-provoking style.

The lead segment, produced by Pam Yates and Paco de Onis, takes Moore and his production team to a Mexican border town where Moore tours American-owned plants under the guise of checking out the possibility of locating the team's production offices south of the border. This tactic, of course, encourages interviewees to "sell" Moore on Mexico. From the plant foreman who commiserates with Moore on the high cost of U.S. labor to the woman from the U.S. side of the border who rationalizes paying Mexican workers less, Moore explores how people do what they need to do to live their lives.

In a segment produced by Jim Czarnecki, the show visits a state-of-the-art prison that was built to revive a sagging economy in the rustbelt town of Appleton, Minnesota, only to be left without prisoners. So guards at the "prison of the future" don't forget how to do their job, local students are recruited to the prison for practice drills. In one of the episode's grimmer segments, the producers pose as a newlywed couple and visit a real estate salesman who tries to sell them evacuated ranch homes in the nation's most notorious toxic-waste dump, the Love Canal.

When NBC airs the special this fall (at press time, the network had not committed to a particular date), Moore may again be attacked by critics for employing manipulative interviewing techniques and humiliating his subjects. Moore insists that he maintains his objectivity during interviews. He says that, while filming, he was always very up front about who his crew was and why they were there. Interviewees often recognized Moore from *Roger & Me* and understood that the program would be entertainment-oriented. Yet, as Moore explained, people still want to talk to the cameras. "Why would I want to speak to the *New York Times*?" he asked (after the paper panned *Roger & Me*). "But I sat down for an interview just the other day. It's partly because, even if the article is horrible, some people will tune in who otherwise wouldn't. Some people will understand."

MARY JANE SKALSKI

Mary Jane Skalski works at Good Machine Productions in Manhattan.

JUAN DOWNEY, 1940-1993

Juan Downey, a video artist who helped to establish his medium as an art form, died of cancer on June 9th at his Manhattan home.

Downey, born in Santiago, Chile, was a draftsman, printmaker, and creator of participatory electronic sculptures before he began devoting his energy exclusively to videotapes, performances, and installation pieces in the 1970s.

Through the years Downey's subject matter evolved from perception and random sounds and images to ecology, politics, and history. His videos often had autobiographical aspects and exam-

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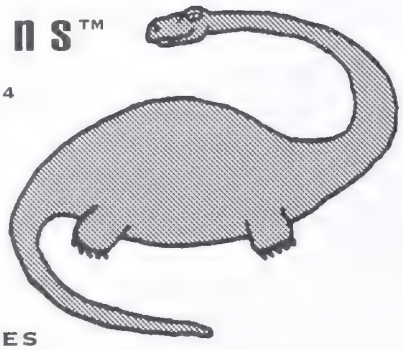
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ined the issues of identity and power. Many of them began with documentary material that he enriched with splicing, mixing, and voiceovers. In Downey's 1972 installation, *Plato Now*, performers interacted with the video process to generate selections from the dialogues of Plato. His later series, *The Thinking Eye*, has been described as "an excavation of the irony contained within the very genre of the documentary."

Rick Feist, who worked with Downey on *The Thinking Eye* and other series, describes his work as "more serious and sophisticated than almost anyone else's. It defied documentary conventions," he adds. "It was much more about the philosophy of knowledge."

Downey had one-man shows at the Whitney Museum of American Art; the International Center of Photography; the University Art Museum, Berkeley, California, and the Contemporary Art Museum in Houston. He taught at Hunter College and the Pratt Institute, instructing students in architecture and video.

SEQUELS

After a lengthy executive search, The Independent Television Service (ITVS) has named a successor to current executive director **John Schott** ("ITVS's Trial by Fire," March 1993). Schott left ITVS in June 1993 to return to teaching. **James Yee**, who has served as founding executive director of the National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) for 12 years, will join ITVS in September. Other recent appointments at ITVS include **Nancy Robinson** to the post of publicity manager and **Gayle Loeber** to station relations manager. Robinson was formerly a Minneapolis-based freelance writer and assistant curator of film and video at Walker Arts Center. Loeber served as director of broadcast and promotion for Mississippi ETV, a state-run network.

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CPB's congressionally mandated Open to the Public Campaign is making headway. The CPB board recently allocated $796,000 for the first two years of the campaign. The components of the budget include a toll-free number, which currently receives 100 to 1,000 public comment calls per week, "town meetings" on the road, opinion polling, an editorial integrity colloquy, and promotional spots. The project costs include $80,000 for meetings within public broadcasting, $130,000 for consultants, and $75,000 for panels of journalists and technical experts to help CPB analyze fairness questions. Those wishing to take advantage of the 800-number to voice an opinion on objectivity and balance in public TV programming should call (800) 356-2626.

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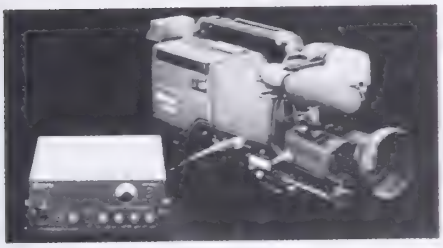
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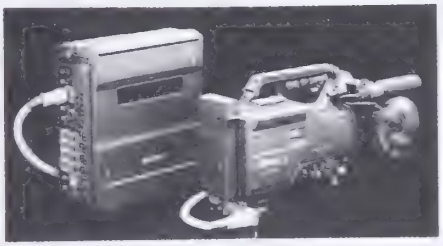
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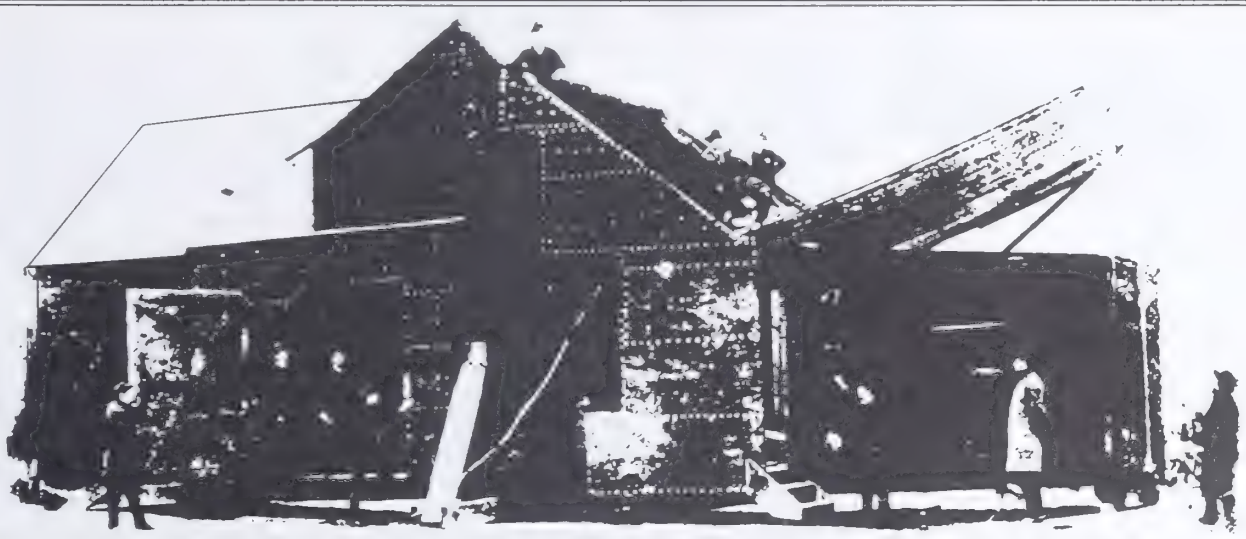
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FUTURESPEAK

News From NAMAC '93

PATRICIA THOMSON

REWIRING OUR NETWORKS

1993 NAMAC National Conference

Newsweek's cover story about the new interactive technology, "Eyes on the Future, and Big Money on the Table," hit the newsstands on May 24, a little over a month after *Time* ran its cover article on "The Info Highway." With these two issues, millions of readers were introduced to the wonders of multimedia, CD ROM, and Virtual Reality and to visions of how the merging telephone-television-computer technologies might affect their business and leisure activities.

A week after the *Newsweek* issue appeared, about 300 members of the media arts community gathered in Chicago from June 3-6 to ponder their own place within this rapidly morphing landscape. The occasion was the 1993 conference of the National Alliance of Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC), cosponsored by the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers and titled Rewiring Our Networks. The assembled media artists and administrators had much to think about, and many felt the pressure was on, for the future was no longer just around the corner; it was a short cab ride down the street—to the McCormick convention center, where the Consumer Electronics Show was on.

Here one could test Virtual Vision glasses, equipped with tiny TV screens, as well as handheld fax wands, wristwatch telephones, and the latest video games from Nintendo, Sega, and Electronic Arts. NAMAC members came back from the convention center buzzing about 3DO, Inc., the company that is devising a "digital interactive multiplayer," a CD system that hooks into a standard television set (instead of a computer) and accommodates a whole host of devices: video games, audio CDs, photo CDs, and film CDs (whenever video compression makes this possible). Plus, one will be able to use it to go online—with friends, strangers, databases—or to hook up with your VCR to edit tapes. (Others were impressed as well; 3DO's stock jumped 12 points by the second day of the trade show.)

Back at the NAMAC conference, held at the Chicago Cultural Center, an exquisite nineteenth century building that until recently housed Chicago's public library (and served as the courtroom setting in DePalma's *The Untouchables*), media arts administrators groped toward their own vision of the future. When media centers were first formed in the 1970s, equipment access was often the incentive. Today, in a world where camcorders cost only $1,000 and Videonics's Thumbs Up controller puts editing in consumers' hands for $229, one has to ask what role media arts centers should now play.

And ask they did. The questions flowed with some urgency: Will financially struggling media centers be able to afford to keep up with high-end digital equipment? What links are being formed between media artists and the "computer dweebs," as they were called, who are on the cutting edge technologically but are desperate for creative applications? What happens to the media arts once the electronic superhighway is real? Will we be left in the dust?

All the accelerating talk about "new technology" can create a sense of urgency: *We've got to get aboard now, before it's too late!* The NAMAC conference had many such moments. But curiously, by the end, one came away somehow reassured. For without fanfare, but time and again, NAMAC members articulated a well-grounded vision for media centers within this shifting landscape. It's one based not on acquiring technology, but on building relationships—with constituents and communities, with policy-makers, with equipment and software suppliers, and with peer organizations. It's about education and training, and it's framed by a progressive social agenda. And, for many media arts centers, it's not an unfamiliar role. "We'll be dealing with the same issues," journalist Pat Aufderheide commented in her plenary talk, as she dissented from both the "alarmist" and "enthusiast" perspectives on the new technology. "Insofar as there are changes, it's not the hardware that's causing those changes; it's what we do with it."

What media arts centers can do is continue to connect people with the tools of production that might otherwise be unavailable to them and provide opportunities for training and exhibition. They don't necessarily need to own the equipment to serve this function; strategic partnerships can pull media centers into the next decade.

"We were tired of being a cheap post house," said Ida Jeter, director of the Center for New Television (CNTV), during the plenary Makers and Media Organizations. CNTV had recently gone through an intensive self-examination when writing a three-year plan for a MacArthur grant, and came away from the process with a renewed sense of mission. "Nonprofits should be a way to contribute to social change," Jeter declared. "We need to map out our relationship to mainstream media as a real alternative and again provide a democratic process." As she explained, "We decided an organization is as healthy as its relationships." So now CNTV is moving towards a more



Who holds the key to the future? As NAMAC members convened in Chicago to discuss the role of media centers in the digital age, across town the latest video games, virtual reality rooms, and high tech bells and whistles were on display at the Consumer Electronics Show.

decentralized model, in which it will increasingly act as a consultant to other organizations.

Partnerships are also key to the Bay Area Video Coalition (BAVC), which offers San Franciscans about 200 workshops per year. As BAVC executive director Sally Jo Fifer outlined in the panel Envisioning the Future of Equipment Access Programs, BAVC has established links with individuals and companies who have high-end equipment that BAVC doesn't. These partnerships allow BAVC members to get training through special seminars, and BAVC can simultaneously test the market and determine which equipment it might eventually bring in-house. "Only by tightly focusing on the user can we choose the right tools," Fifer noted. BAVC has ties with, among others, San Francisco State University's Multimedia Studies Program, AVID, Super Mac (which loaned BAVC some digital film cards for one year, used to teach Quicktime), George Lukas' Industrial Light and Magic, and Metalanguage, a San Francisco-based company which designs software for the AVID and Digidesign.

BAVC's ties with AVID, in fact, helped persuade the company to set up a demonstration of the AVID Media Suite Pro at the Chicago conference, in what was NAMAC's first-ever manufacturer demo. According to BAVC's Luke Hones, who hosted the session, the AVID rep came away very pleased with this encounter (as did the 25 attendees) and considered this audience particularly engaged and knowledgeable about the nonlinear editing system.

With Rewiring Our Networks, NAMAC gingerly dipped its toes into the equipment-show waters (a direction that might lure more individual producers to future conferences). In addition to the AVID session, there were a few electronic bulletin board demos. David Hughes, a colorful Texan who bills himself "the cursor cowboy," showed how he transmits Native American art and other creative material through cyberspace. And there was a demonstration of Arts Wire, the one-year-old computer network for arts organizations which now has 150-200 subscribers. Arts Wire executive committee member Rose Parisi walked through the various services and conferences, pausing at the grant resource list ("Money") and the news bulletin board ("HotWire"). She also dropped in on the beginning of an open conference on "AWNews" about the the settlement of the NEA 4 lawsuit, which was announced in the *Washington Post* that day.

This was good news. The four performance artists whose grants were vetoed by NEA chair John Frohnmayer in 1990—Holly Hughes, Karen Finley, Tim Miller, and John Fleck—had their $5,000-$8,000 grants reinstated, according to the artists' co-counsels. They will also receive $6,000 each in compensatory damages for invasion of privacy (their grant applications were leaked to syndicated conservative columnists Rowland Evans and Robert Novak by a White House-installed NEA staffer). Included in the award is $202,000 in legal fees and litigation costs. The settlement was reached after the Justice Department stepped in and recommended to the NEA that it not let the case go to trial. The turning point came in the discovery phase, when it was revealed that President Bush and White House Chief of Staff John Sununu had directly applied pressure on Frohnmayer to deny the grants, and that the NEA chief had justified his veto on political (vs. artistic) grounds, openly stating to his staff that they all had to "live in a political world." The artists' victory was clouded, however, by the NEA's version of the settlement; their press release stated "the monies going to the plaintiffs as a result of the settlement are not grants."

It was quite something to go on Arts Wire in the week that followed the announcement and see David Mendoza, executive director of the National Campaign for Freedom of Expression, directly sparring with an NEA spokesperson about their conflicting versions of the settlement. This was a clear reminder of how the issues remain the same, even if the tools of communication change. So, too, were the controversies that swirled around the National Endowment for the Arts' Media Arts Fund (MAF) and the Independent Television Service (ITVS) during the course of the NAMAC conference. Both, of course, involve the allocation of shrinking public funds. And one involves accusations of homophobia. New issues? Hardly.

Begun in 1991, the Media Arts Fund (MAF) is a $250,000 pot of money that the NEA gives NAMAC to regrant to small, emerging, or culturally diverse media arts organizations. The 1992 round was marred by NEA lame-duck chair Anne Imelda Radice vetoing three NAMAC-panel-approved grants, all supporting gay and lesbian film festivals ["Radice's Last Stand," January/February 1993].

During the conference, the controversy revolved around the exclusion of film and video festivals from eligibility for 1993 MAF grants. In the eyes of many NAMAC members, this unfairly targets gay and lesbian groups. As NAMAC board member Tom Borrup noted during the NAMAC membership meeting, given the fact that the only festivals applying last year were gay and lesbian, "It's pretty clear that this is another vehicle to exclude gay and lesbian organizations."

NEA Media Arts Program director Brian O'Doherty flatly denies this. "Festivals were excluded from funding for years by the Media Arts Program; panels favored year-round exhibition programs," O'Doherty told *The Independent*. "We still don't have the word 'festival' in our guidelines." While initially some festivals were funded through MAF, O'Doherty notes that "as the Fund began, the Endowment's reauthorization [by Congress] strongly emphasized education programs."

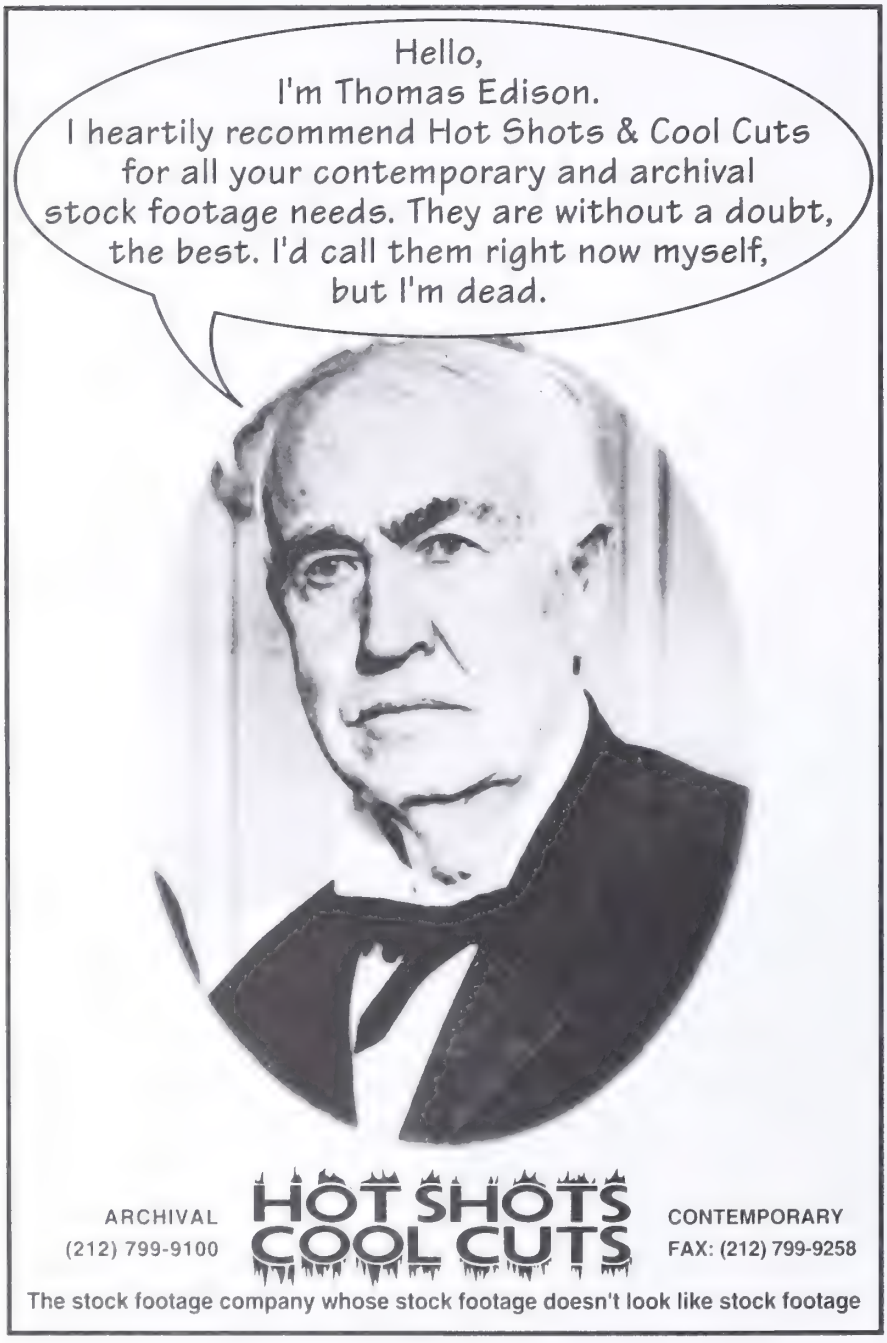
The NEA's reauthorization in 1989 occurred during an unrelenting siege from the Far Right. Then and later, congressional critics scored easy points in the battle for public perception on the basis of uncontextualized descriptions or titles—including festival film titles like *We're Talking Vulva*, read into the *Congressional Record* and picked up by the newspapers. With accusations of "lack of accountability" its Achilles heel, the agency is now wary of providing grants for programs without first seeing the list of inclusions.

Rebutting accusations that MAF penalizes gay and lesbian applicants, O'Doherty points out, "Three gay/lesbian organizations were funded this year for educational purposes"—the same three, in fact, that were vetoed last year. While, to some, this cuts the edge off their complaints, the gay/lesbian festivals say that for a funder to prioritize educational programs puts the cart before the horse. "Even though it's nice to have money for a

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membership drive, it's not what we need the money for the most; we need it to put on the festival," says Terry Lawler of the New Festival. The Pittsburgh Lesbian and Gay International Film Festival received a MAF grant to develop a fledgling program that brings in local scholars to talk about the films. However, says Lawler, "They weren't ready to expand that program," and such premature growth can overly stress a small organization.

At the NAMAC membership meeting, discussion quickly moved to a set of recommendations drawn up by the Gay and Lesbian Alliance for Media Arts, a caucus group formed during the conference. NAMAC members focused on the item asking the NAMAC board and staff "to immediately begin negotiations with the NEA to challenge the exclusion of festivals in the 1994 MAF guidelines and to consider, if necessary, the rejection of the NAMAC role as regrantor of these funds." The idea of walking away from this $250,000 fund set off a debate that quickly exposed the fissures within NAMAC.

For smaller organizations, $4,000 (MAF's average grant) can make all the difference. MAF has, in fact, been successful in bringing new organizations to the NEA, as well as into NAMAC's membership roster. As Borrup reported, during its 1992 round NAMAC received 165 proposals from 37 states asking for a total of $1.8-million. Forty percent were from multicultural groups. Of the 53 organizations recommended by the peer panel, 37 had never before received NEA money. As Cheryl Fabio-Bradford pointed out, "There's a history of denying people of color access to everything," and MAF's support was critical to the success of numerous projects run by people of color in raising matching funds. "We don't want to go back to being volunteer organizations."

But others wanted NAMAC to take a stand on this hot-button issue within the larger culture war. As many pointed out, gays and lesbians have constantly been taking hits—in the arts, in the military, on the school boards. "It's on page one every day," said videomaker Tony Conrad. "It's time to fish or cut bait."

Ultimately, the membership voted to endorse the recommendations, passing them on to the NAMAC board. The next day, the board agreed on a two-pronged course: engage the NEA's Media Program in a discussion about revising the MAF guidelines for 1994, and conduct its own in-depth review of this controversial fund (which the NEA is also doing at this three-year mark).

Another contentious debate at NAMAC, conducted in private meetings, centered on ITVS' Generation project, a $1.3-million grant for a series of shows produced for and by youth. The award went to *Road Trip*, a project of Shauna Garr, a producer who has worked with NBC, MTV, and the start-up cable network Green Communications, and founded The Right Channel, a nonprofit group "dedicated to the production of films and videos created with the active participa-

tion of teenagers." The concept of *Road Trip*, as described in Garr's call for participants, is, "Four teenagers, 'Travelers,' will be chosen to drive cross-country (all expenses plus salary paid), and chronicle their journey. Along the way, these traveling filmmakers will meet other teenagers, who will introduce the Travelers to their worlds."

What ITVS passed up for this concept raised the eyebrows of many media educators. One strong application came from a coalition of 16 schools and organizations which joined hands in a collaborative proposal organized by the Educational Video Center (EVC). All had long track records in community-based media education: SWAMP, Appalshop, Dearborn High School in Michigan, the Vietnamese Youth Development Center in San Francisco, Native Visions Center in New Mexico, Alaska Public Radio, and others. Each would form "youth teams" who would conceive, shoot, and edit the programs, centered on four themes: school, relationships, power, and culture and identity. A personal documentary portrait would form each show's backbone, with video letters, video diaries, dramatizations, dance and music segments, and "behind the scenes" footage constituting the rest of the program.

During the NAMAC conference, members of the National Alliance of Media Educators (NAME) met with ITVS Special Projects coordinator Lynn Kirby to express their concerns about *Road Trip*'s potential exploitation of the teenagers involved. Many NAME members werepart of the EVC proposal, but hoped their reservations would not be taken as sour grapes. "There were other community-based proposals submitted that we would have been happy with," notes EVC associate director David Murdoch.

NAME members pointed out a number of concerns. First, the timetable: late August to November 1993—during the fall semester. While Road Trip Productions' call for participants states it "will work with them to obtain independent study credit," critics note that schools and colleges may not oblige their request and fear the prospect of a cross-country road trip and appearance on TV might "seduce" students into dropping out of school. "Most of what we [media educators] do is bust our butts to keep them *in* school," observed SWAMP's Deborah Leveranz.

"This is not a seduction campaign," Kirby told *The Independent*. "We are talking to the parents. And we're bending over backwards to discourage kids who are going to college [from applying]. The kids are receiving training and skills; this is far from being a joy ride. They'll come away with the skills to produce a national show."

The second issue for *Road Trip*'s critics is that, given its nature as a road movie, the Travelers won't be producing work about their own communities, but will drop in, visit local teens, then move on—following a much-criticized broadcast news model rather than a community-based approach. Kirby counters the Travelers will be staying with 16 teens in eight states selected as local "guides," who will be tied into their communities. "We're talking about forming relationships," Kirby says, and "letting [the Travelers] find out about kids outside their back yards."

Still, many media educators are concerned *Road Trip* may not be in the kids' best interest. "Do we want to encourage them to become an independent producer at age 19, or do something that will be *good* for them, like go to college?" queries Murdoch. "For us, video is a hook to get kids into reading and writing; it's beyond the video product."

More people are disturbed that, when given a choice, ITVS awarded all $1.3-million to a single producing team, rather than spread it out to a broad, community-based coalition of media educators. But as Kirby notes, "Generation was conceived as a TV series initiative, versus a media education initiative, which it's not." ITVS is satisfied that the grant went to the applicant with the best designed, most original series.

But those who believe that ITVS was created to support innovative, independent work that otherwise would have slim chance of being funded or broadcast were disturbed by the selection of a producing team with strong ties to broadcast television, frequently citing Garr's connections with MTV. They also note that Garr's network of teen participants is being pulled together post facto, while other applicants already had such youth relations in place. (By the time of the NAMAC conference, Garr had gotten in touch with many of these organizations about supplying teens for her project—a request that was met with ambivalent feelings and a mixed response.)

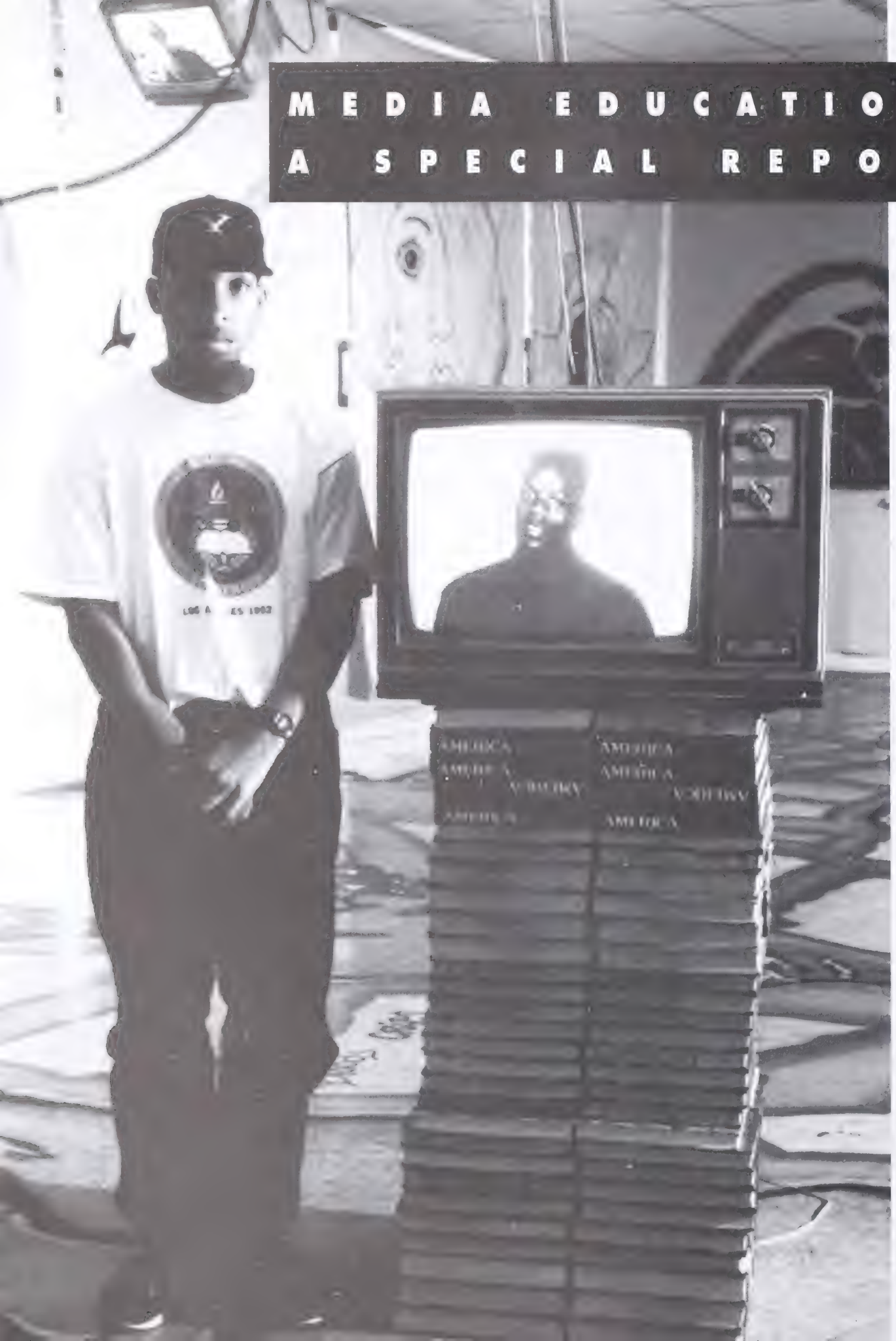
Kirby points out that all Generation applicants had someone on their producing team with solid broadcast experience, and details Garr's credentials in nonprofit media. "She's part of the field," Kirby insists. As to the much-discussed question of whether ITVS should be expected to "give back" to the independent media community that created it, she replies, "Yes, it should. But, one, we have been doing this through Open Call. And, two, is she part of the field or not? Who defines the field? This is a good question, and we need to define this more."

As usual, NAMAC's conference ran broad rather than deep, leaving such probing questions unanswered. Sessions focused on everything from preservation to public policy, and this breadth resulted in the customary sense of frustration that nothing concrete was accomplished. Nonetheless, the 1993 gathering was important; NAMAC's conferences are one of the few opportunities people in the field have to come together face to face—whether to express criticism or to form alliances. And at a time when new technology's promises dazzle, it's nice to remember that nothing can beat a handshake and a schmooze over a bottle of Berghoff's beer.

Patricia Thomson is editor of The Independent.



MEDIA EDUCATION: A SPECIAL REPORT



AN OVERVIEW

Inquiring Minds Want to Know: What Is Media Literacy?

DEBORAH LEVERANZ AND KATHLEEN TYNER

The Japanese call it *johoshakai*, the Age of Information, and if the soothsayers are correct, it will change the world of the future as surely as railroads transformed society in the nineteenth century. Instead of new products and commodities, the telecommunications highways of the Age of Information are positioned to transport a burgeoning commodity as old as civilization: information. It remains to be seen if increased access to information can improve the human condition, but is apparent that humans are already awash in more information than the world has ever seen. Technology pundits gleefully describe how it will be processed, packaged, and delivered to every home. As people clamor for access to more and more information, a niggling question remains: what are people going to do with all this information once they receive it?

Media literacy offers an answer. The internationally recognized definition of media literacy, and one used to mandate media literary in Canada's public schools, is "the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and produce communication in a variety of forms." Media literacy extends the traditional notion of literacy to include electronic forms of communication. In fact, media literacy is nothing new. It is the same old literacy with a fancy name. Like print literacy, media literacy is a lifelong process. And like print literacy, the fact that people can make sense of words on a page without moving their lips (or watch TV while talking on the phone) doesn't necessarily mean they are literate.

Media education recognizes that raw information is probably worse than useless if people do not have the skills to organize, evaluate, and make it work for them. According to its champions, media education builds the necessary information processing skills to negotiate contemporary society in ways that are both personally and socially satisfying.

Media literacy is not only about reading. Increased access to video equipment, computers, and other new technologies means that consumers also have the ability to produce their own messages. In 1992, there were 40,000 electronic bulletin board services in the United States. By 1993, the number had skyrocketed to 60,000. Consumer video equipment wed to computers offers unforeseen avenues to produce and transmit words and pictures anywhere in the world. People are desperate to learn how to use information technologies. In its second year, the Multimedia Institute at San Francisco State University has a waiting list of 300 students.

As people become more sophisticated media users, these skills carry a tremendous potential for the revitalization of both education and the arts in an Age of Information. Media education provides a structure for discourse on diverse and sometimes polarized issues—independent versus mainstream media, stereotyping versus alternative representation, consumerism, propaganda, and censorship. It offers methods for articulate self-expression about media information that can be transferred to a variety of personal and civic purposes.

The discursive kind of literacy envisioned by media educators demands a cultural, historical, economic, and social context for complete understanding of media messages. The process begins when the reader mentally questions mediated information in books, on television, and in all sorts of pop culture messages. This process of questioning information is what media literacy education is all about. As Elizabeth Thoman, executive director of the Center for Media and Values in Los Angeles says, "Media literacy is not about finding the right answers, but about asking the right questions."

Why should independent film/videomakers care about this media literacy movement? Is it for the development of audiences for alternative works? Or to encourage future makers to carry on a tradition of personal vision works? Is it to provide an arena for discourse on the social and political impact of society's self-representations? Is it to empower underrepresented or disenfranchised populations? There is no right answer, and there are many other "right" questions.

A short history lesson

Media education in the United States probably began at the turn of the century with the acceptance of the novel, considered a radical form of popular culture at the time, in traditional schooling. It has enjoyed popularity sporadically in this century, primarily as a reaction to the introduction of new pop culture communication forms, such as comic books, film, radio, and especially television. The typical position taken by media educators throughout history, as each new medium was introduced, pitted popular culture against fine arts, with media—the primary disseminators of popular culture fare—clearly on the defensive. This protectionist stance toward media was derived from assumptions based more on conventional wisdom than on social science research—such assumptions as: 1) Popular culture is inferior to fine arts as a subject for study; 2) popular culture directly causes anti-social behavior; 3) audience members have little control over the power of media; 4) Americans would prefer classical books and music to popular culture, once they were educated to enjoy them by those with discriminating taste; and most of all, 5) even though "the business of America is business," commercialism in any form is bad.

The problem is, who decides what is "good media," and how can "bad media" be regulated? Short of the sheer force of will that adults can exercise over children, the hope for early attempts at media education put stock in "critical viewing" that allowed people to see the error of their popular culture ways and self-regulate their use of media.

In this reactionary vein, the 1970s marked the first concerted effort to involve elementary and secondary students in media studies through critical

Courtesy Gina Lamb and Frank Young, Jefferson High School, Humanitas program, Los Angeles, CA

viewing of television, fueled by a 1972 Surgeon General's Advisory Committee on Television and Violence that pointed to a link between television violence and anti-social behavior. Some highly public critical viewing skills curricula were funded by the U.S. Department of Education, including those developed at WNET-New York, Far West Laboratory in San Francisco, and a number of private companies. Substantial school funding allowed for production equipment purchases that fueled a renaissance of mediamaking alongside critical viewing. This was augmented by the emergence of the nascent media arts field, which came about in the mid-seventies when the National Endowment for the Arts created a major media arts center category, and financial support and sanction was forthcoming from major foundations, most notably Rockefeller. With a favorable funding climate and a recognition of media as an arts discipline, numerous young people trained in the schools went on to join forces with or start media arts centers.

Many of the media education efforts in the 1970s were recognized as successful—from *Sesame Street* to Kodak's "visual literacy" curriculum to the federal government's various programs providing financial support for equipment in the schools. Nonetheless, media education came to be seen as another educational fad with no real purpose. By the early 1980s, the conservative "back-to-basics" movement in U.S. schooling choked off official sanction for the fragile media education movement before it could take root. A dwindling economy nearly killed it off.

New, improved media education

Ten years later, a revitalized brand of media education sprouted from earlier critical viewing efforts. A hybrid of art, science, and education, the media literacy movement of the 1990s is more about education than it is about media. Driven by a need to reform and restructure schools, it seeks to revitalize education by positioning media arts, instead of the traditional language arts, at the heart of all disciplines in the curriculum. In this way, reading and writing is still about pencils and books, but it is also about the symbolic and visual languages of film, video, computers, and popular culture texts.

The media education movement in the late twentieth century has much in common with those who seek school reform, away from a factory model of education that sees the student as a standardized end product to one that offers learners an opportunity to direct their own learning. This method of learner-centered education is not new. It was touted by John Dewey in *Democracy* and *Experience in Education* during the last wave of Progressive reform in the late teens and early 1920s in the United States. Dewey championed the need for hands-on experiential learning, democratic schools, and inquiry-based methods of instruction. His attempts to bridge art and science are of particular interest to those who produce hands-on media with kids. He says, "Scientific and artistic systems embody the same principles of the relationship of life to its surroundings, and both satisfy the same fundamental needs."

The inquiry-based method of posing questions and encouraging students to question is classical "Socratic method" practiced by the ancient Greeks, who ironically thought that the introduction of reading and writing was a dangerous threat to oral culture, a premonition that was probably on target.

The two most prominent practitioners of school reform at this time are the Foxfire teachers, begun in Appalachia and headquartered in Georgia, and the Coalition of Essential Schools, a school reform effort begun by Professor Ted Sizer at Brown University. Both of these reform movements address the best teaching style and institutional setting for inquiry-based, experiential, democratic, and student-centered learning and have chapters operating nationwide.

Although the principles of school reform are generally popular, real reform encounters resistance every step of the way in a skirmish of control over public schools that involves issues of turf, economics, and culture. Whole careers can tumble, as is the case when site-based management of local schools is taken from mid-level educational bureaucrats:-At its most basic, the reform issue questions the power of the teacher, who is on some levels an agent of the state, and elevates the power of students. As in any change, school reform involves major shifts of power that are slow to implement and quick to encounter obstructionist tactics.

In short, the school reform movement emphasizes: 1) student-centered learning; 2) democratic classrooms; 3) hands-on, project-based work; 4) inquiry-based education; 5) research-based approaches; 5) alternatives to standardized testing; and 6) cooperative learning. Those who practice media education insist that the learning environment must include many of these school reform elements and that media studies is not complete unless students have experience in both analysis of media and hands-on production.

Proponents agree on other principles as well: 1) Media are not "windows on the world," but are carefully manufactured products with social, political, and commercial implications; 2) even though media are not "real," they affect people in real ways; 3) the McLuhanist idea that each medium has a unique language that influences the content being delivered; 4) audience members are not passive, but actively create meanings that sometimes subvert the meanings intended by the producers.

Media educators stress that the primary goal of media education is not merely to train future media workers or to provide students with outlets for personal self-expression, but to foster the kind of critical autonomy it takes to be informed citizens in a democratic society. If, the argument goes, literacy is the cornerstone of a democratic society, then media literacy is essential for an informed citizenry. As an emerging field, media educators are striving for the goal of democratic citizenship from a variety of approaches. The goal is to find common ground, shared principles, and an articulated mission that unifies the various factions in media education so that it can forge ahead as an integral part of American education.

The great divide

Ironically, media literacy suffers from too much of a good thing. It isn't that no one knows what media literacy is. The problem is that everyone has earnest ideas about how to go about it. Because each media educator works in isolated circumstances, opportunities are rare for the kind of discourse necessary to hammer out a broad consensus about the processes, skills, and principles that constitute a complete course of media study.



Courtesy Dearborn High School, Dearborn, MI

This engenders some heated discussion in the small but growing discipline. The debate centers around the goals and purposes of media education, but it also includes strong opinions about how much structure media education should include. Since media education is composed of two parts, analysis and production, the debate usually splits along those lines, most often pitting media artists, who tend to favor production, against reform-minded educators, who think the analysis side of media education is most important. Community access producers, media professionals, and average citizens have their own vocal notions about why we need media education and what path it should take.

Those who favor analysis believe that production is important only as it informs the analysis of mass media products. Generally speaking, the analysis crowd is composed mostly of certified school teachers and university educators who would like to see a formal and structured approach to media study. Many of them have no production training and are often not particularly comfortable with media technologies.

The production proponents, on the other hand, are mostly made up of media artists who have seen firsthand the power of student production to increase student self-esteem through self-expression and to offer a voice to those who have been marginalized by mass media. The media artists complain that the analysis component can be accomplished through a less-structured osmosis process of learning by doing. Media artists have also seen arts education eroded in public schools and feel strongly about the need to strengthen the arts through media arts education.

Hands-on video production has a tough enough time in public schools. Access to equipment is usually a problem, and it is so alien to teachers and administrators that they sometimes don't know what to do with it. Even so, the teachers are curious about video, and there is some evidence that its use in the classroom is exploding. A 1991 survey by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting found that 56.4 percent of the California public schools surveyed reported hands-on video production in the curriculum. Since video production is almost never a part of teacher training, teachers need media artists to help them use video to further their curricular goals. The artists can also nudge teachers out of the amateur's trap of replicating broadcast models of production (let's make a news show, tape the football game, etc.) and into new and exciting formats for self-expression and activism.

International media educators watch the U.S. media movement with amusement. They marvel that the U.S. produces more media than any country on earth, but that in education about media, Americans come in dead last. They chortle as the U.S. gropes toward media education, because they've seen it all before—20 years ago in their own countries.

The international context

It is not true that there is no concerted media education effort in North America. In fact, Canada has mandated media literacy in Ontario (not coincidentally the home of the late Marshall McLuhan). The Canadians practice a form of media education sometimes called the U.K. (United Kingdom) Model, owing to its refinement in Australia, Great Britain, and Canada. Media education in those countries is well-established, sometimes practiced as its own subject area, and sometimes integrated across the curriculum. Although most often found as part of the secondary curriculum, it is beginning to be included as part of primary schooling, due in part to the fact that every teacher in Ontario now has an opportunity to take media studies classes in the course of his or her teacher training.

The Canadians may be the leaders in North America, but the Australians are widely acknowledged to have the most experience in developing theory and practice in media studies. The Australian Teachers of Media (ATOM) membership fluctuates from 1,000 to 2,000 members, many of them beginning in "screen education" in the 1960s. "Screen education" was the name given to film studies at the time, and many of the principles are still used in the analysis of electronic media. ATOM members have produced hundreds of curriculum frameworks, books, and teacher resources over the years and have proven themselves to be a powerful force for school reform. In Australia, media education began as a grassroots teacher movement and includes a strong media arts component.

In England, the British Film Institute produces media education resources for media teachers throughout the United Kingdom and works with a number of teacher training centers throughout England and Scotland. Also in England, the work of a core group of intellectuals positioned media education as an essential component for democratic citizenship. Len Masterman, author of *Teaching the Media*, has the highest profile in the United States. His work stresses the role of critical teaching and learning as the core of media literacy analysis and practice. The goal of media education, according to Masterman, is "critical autonomy"—the ability of students to practice questioning media with their teachers until they automatically question all information, every time they encounter it.

The work of Paulo Friere influenced a similar media education movement in South America, and media educators can be found on every continent, in both developed and developing countries. A media education conference sponsored by UNESCO, the French media education organization CLEMI, and the British Film Institute in 1989 in France hosted media educators from 22 countries from every continent. It was apparent at the UNESCO meeting that the U.S. had a long way to go to get in step with the international media literacy movement.



This is due in part to the fact that media education is approached in the United States from a wide, sometimes conflicting, variety of purposes that touch on aspects of the ability to "access, analyze, evaluate, and produce communication in a variety of forms." Few programs in the U.S. approach the ability of international media educators to integrate these four skills into a coherent and structured whole. As media teachers begin to find common ground and work toward a unified goal of media education for all students, the field of media education will take on increasing importance in global educational reform efforts.

Bridging the gap

In 1992, two events helped to bring media educators together to find common ground and to lay the groundwork for the discourse, support, and organization necessary to bring media education to the United States. With these events, media artists, educators, and community leaders crossed disciplinary boundaries to forge a fragile synthesis of education and the arts, opening new and challenging opportunities to bridge the gaps between technology, education, and the arts through the analysis and production of media.

In April 1992, an unprecedented gathering of government officials, educational policy analysts, educators, and artists met in Austin, Texas, for a conference cosponsored by the Southwest Alternate Media Project (Houston), Strategies for Media Literacy (San Francisco), and the National Alliance for Media Arts and Culture (Oakland, California). At that conference, the group formed the National Alliance for Media Education (NAME), a coalition of individuals and organizations with a common goal of promoting media education in the United States ["What's in NAME's Name?," April 1993].

NAME is in its infancy, but has already received a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts to create a database of media educators in partnership with the National Telemedia Council, one of the oldest media education groups in the United States. Other NAME projects planned for 1994 include a student tape exchange and dissemination of media education information.

In December 1992, an international group of media educators met at the Aspen Institute Leadership Forum on Media Literacy to discuss strategies for supporting media education in the United States. The gathering offered a rare opportunity for those in the field to begin a discourse about the role and purpose of media education in the United States. A position paper on media literacy was released by the Aspen Institute in June 1993.*

The media literacy movement in the United States is currently enjoying attention from a wide variety of sectors. Several nonprofit organizations continue to create materials, offer support, and networking opportunities for media teachers [see Resources, page 38-39]. Public access producers are including media education as part of their production training, and arts institutions are looking at ways to incorporate media education into their community outreach programs.

Individual media artists are finding their own place in the media education movement. The hope is to get alternative works included in the school curriculum—teaching *about* media, not using media as an illustration for other subjects. Media education not only opens a new market for distributors of independent work, it also provides what independent producers are best at—access to different points of view, with an infrastructure for presentation and discourse. The media artists and organizations that have been working with young people since the 1970s and later are beginning to find new opportunities within the educational and social systems. These are no longer tied strictly to arts education, vocational education, or at-risk populations, but are integrated into the fabric of our life-long learning.

Corporations are also starting to show some interest. They see a chance to "re-purpose" their footage for media education uses, especially in the field of multimedia production. For example, ABC Interactive has the opportunity now to re-purpose news footage for interactive, edu-tainment products that teach about science, health, and history. In the past, most of that footage would be literally as old as yesterday's newspapers. Now it can

* *Media Literacy: A Report of the National Leadership Conference on Media Literacy*, by Patricia Audefheide, is available from: The Aspen Institute, 1755 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Suite 501, Washington DC 20036; fax: (202) 986-1913.

make money for ABC again and again.

Unaccustomed to the limelight, the challenge for media educators is to stay the course so that media education does not simply become this year's buzz word, only to be discarded by the next educational fad.

Where do we go from here?

The hope for media education lies in its ability to form coalitions and alliances and to bridge divisions in the field. Support from the upper echelons of the educational bureaucracy is vital, but the center will not hold without an equal push from the grassroots that demands media education at the local level in schools, community groups, and arts programs.

Arts educators see media education at its most basic as a way to approach audience development. Although not every media student will become a mediamaker, all of them are audience members and citizens who can benefit from sophisticated understanding of mass media materials. To maintain and develop audiences for alternative media, it is the artists' job to team with educators to articulate a compelling vision of media education in the United States, one that provides the arena for asking the right questions and coming up with new answers in the Age of Information.

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C U R R I C U L A

See Dick and Jane Deconstruct: ABCs of Teaching Media Literacy

RENEE HOBBS



Artwork from "Sharing One Earth" courtesy students of Indian Island School, Penobscot Nation, Indian Island, Maine

"Curriculum" is a most misunderstood word. For those outside the enterprise of education, it has an authoritative mystique which has been known to silence questions from parents and community members ever since the work of educators began to be professionalized in the nineteenth century. There is, however, a powerful analogy to be drawn between the work educators engage in when in the process of developing curriculum and the process artists, writers, and filmmakers use when constructing a film, writing a play, or editing a videotape. A curriculum is a set of choices that are made by an educator, choices about what to teach and how to teach it.

In the United States, consensus about what is worthwhile and appropriate media literacy education is just beginning to emerge. Because education is so decentralized, American educators have been free to experiment with a wide range of approaches to the study of the mass media at the K-12 level. Such diversity in approaches allows the creation of a number of different school-based laboratories in which to explore the viability of media literacy in real world contexts, instead of the short-term artificial settings often



Courtesy Lauren Axelrod, Houston, TX

developed by scholars.

But the lack of consensus among educators is a powerful obstacle, too. As schools move towards the increasing standardization of outcomes in education, the blurry and multiple curricular visions of media literacy may keep it at the margins of subject areas like the visual arts, language arts, and social studies, instead of propelling it towards the center.

Since curriculum is a set of choices, the construction of curriculum is essentially a creative and autonomous act on the part of each teacher. However, classroom teachers make curricular choices in response to their personal values and experience, their own levels of knowledge and competence about various topics, organizational directives in the form of district and school policy, and obligations resulting from their relationships with students. Many committed and creative educators, in the almost total isolation of their own classrooms, have engaged in the process of constructing new curriculum with the broad label of "media literacy."

So what is the curriculum of media literacy, if it is not to be a separate discipline or subject area, but instead a method of organizing the analysis and production of messages that come in a variety of forms? Let us examine the important choices teachers make in constructing the curriculum of media literacy.

Why teach media literacy?

Media literacy educators have diverse reasons for engaging in the process of helping students analyze and produce messages in a variety of forms. Some teachers seek to help students acquire useful skills for getting a job. Some want to help students strengthen their speaking, writing, and reasoning skills. Some seek to help students become politically empowered to take on the mantle of social change. Some seek to provide students with skepticism, so that they are less vulnerable to manipulation and propaganda. Some aim to build students' self esteem. Some are attempting to introduce students to the aesthetic values of film and video arts, with the goal of developing young audiences for the alternative arts. Some are simply trying to enliven their classrooms and keep students awake.

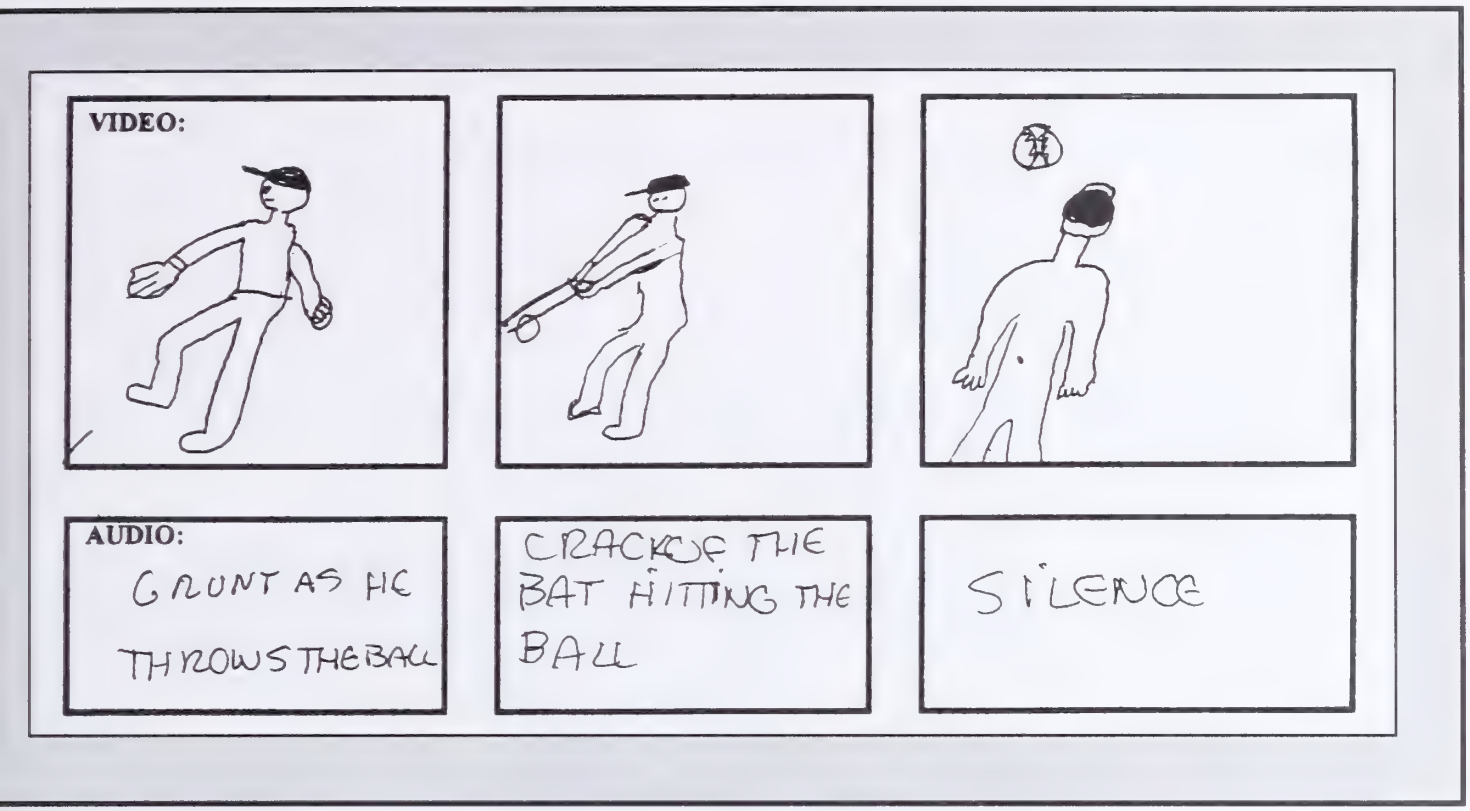
Such diversity must be viewed as inevitable, since it reflects the profound ambivalence that exists among citizens about the role of the mass media in American society. Of course, some of these goals are more worthy than others, but, more importantly, without a shared vision concerning the intrinsic value and appropriate purposes of media literacy, it is unlikely that media literacy will continue to gain momentum in school districts across the nation. Consider educator Cary Bazalgette's vision, based on her experience at the British Film Institute, of the purpose of media education, noted in *Media Education: Teaching English in the National Curriculum Series*: "Media education is often seen as a way of defending children from television. It ought to be seen as a way of giving them high expectations of television, of all media, and of themselves."

What to teach?

Because media literacy is generally integrated within the existing subject areas in K-12, choices about what to teach are often subordinated to existing frameworks in language arts, visual arts, and social studies. In the United States, the dominant organizing framework applied in media literacy has been based generally on genre, medium, or form. For example, the study of photography comes as a unit in a visual arts class. Analyzing advertising has long been the province of educators in the language arts, who often approach this subject from the perspective of rhetoric, while analyzing news is frequently studied within the domain of the social studies.

In some curricula, the media arts are explicitly studied in the context of visual and performing arts. For example, in the state of New York, the media arts are explored as just one of many forms of expression, with emphasis on developing students' aesthetic sensitivity, creative potential, self-esteem, and awareness of cultural and artistic heritage. This paradigm uses the split focus in arts education: the balance and tension between production and analysis.

Arts educators have long recognized the very important balance between learning how to make and create and learning how to analyze and appreciate. However, as might be expected in a nation that is enamored of technology, media arts curriculum in the United States tends to focus almost exclusively on production. Students make videos. Video production classes



are available in almost 50 percent of American secondary schools. Most frequently, this work is completed in small groups or teams, but sometimes students work individually. In some schools, school administrators assign the content of the videos, so that students work as a crew to produce various programs for the school community; in other schools, students select their own topics and make their own programs which may be broadcast on local cable access stations.

But because the content of such work is actually teaching about a creative process, much media production activity is marginalized in the larger context of secondary education, where memorization of content and limited attention to meaningful skills is still routine in many school environments. Arts educators have a compelling set of arguments about the relevance of the arts in education, but in most schools, the arts are almost completely isolated, underfunded, and undervalued. And unfortunately in many schools, video production teachers see themselves as technicians, not creative artists. In these schools the focus of media arts activity is on using equipment effectively, not on self-expression, reasoning or aesthetic appreciation. Among these teachers, the alternative arts are only rarely used as resource materials for analysis or study.

In many states, state arts education funding supports the work of filmmakers and artists in public school classrooms and in non-school settings. Such activity is designed to enrich students' appreciation for the work of filmmakers, independent producers, and media artists and to develop students' creativity and problem-solving skills. There have been numerous exemplary programs over the years in many states throughout the nation.

But because such funding often goes to support direct contact with as many students as possible, media artists may not have the time or skills necessary to work closely with teaching staff. Instead of providing valuable learning experiences for teachers, media artists in the classroom sometimes find themselves replacing the teacher, introducing a set of activities or a curriculum that may or may not be supported by the school community. Teachers sometimes see this kind of enrichment as a well-deserved break, and, as a result, such programs may miss their full potential to serve in the continuing education of teachers as well as to reach students. Many times, such programs are impossible for schools to sustain after the program has been completed either because they require the expertise of the media artist, because access to technology is not permanently available to the school community, or because changes are made to the school schedule. Most arts education programs have focused their attention on direct contact with students, not on teacher education. When funding evaporates, teachers may be unable or unwilling to continue the good work established by the media artist. Such programs do not encourage schools to make the media arts an integrated component of the school curriculum.

But the most severe limitation of media arts programs that focus on production activities is the lack of connection made between the media arts and the world of popular culture which students experience daily. Because students have such limited exposure to the alternative arts, many times filmmakers and media artists are frustrated by students' lack of interest in documentaries and their incessant interest in producing music videos and commercials, the two most important genres for many adolescents. Teachers, media artists, and filmmakers must help students to appreciate alternative media arts—not in isolation, but in relation to commercially produced works through discussion, viewing analysis, and production activities of a wide range of materials. It is important to recognize that students' expectations about film, television, and the arts have been shaped by their experience. And that experience has been shaped by exposure to the mass media. It is only through the integrated analysis of "texts" from both the alternative arts community and commercial media productions that students' expectations can be stretched.

What sources to use?

It is in the selection of texts and materials that some of the central paradoxes of media literacy are apparent. Educators have been charged with the mission of upholding and passing along cultural values for thousands of years, and this process is generally thought of as static and immutable. Media literacy presents a profound challenge to this enterprise, since it insists that all cultural messages should be critically analyzed. But the question remains: would the inclusion of popular media, such as situation

LESSON PLAN: THE INDEPENDENT VOICE

Visit a local access cable television station and conduct a survey of independent and community producers.

Goals and Objectives:

1. Students will gain research and interviewing experience and develop communication skills;
2. Students will gain knowledge about the wide variety of factors that motivate individuals to pursue an interest in communicating their independent voice;
3. Students will gain exposure to the process of constructing noncommercial video messages;
4. Students will gain experience selecting and editing information;
5. Students will strengthen their appreciation of community activism.

Lesson Plan Overview:

Students plan a visit to a local access studio and watch some examples of local access programming from their own community to understand what makes it unique, and engage in analysis to discover similarities and differences between alternative video and commercially produced media. They interview a variety of independent producers and local cable access staff about the creative, political, economic, and organizational challenges faced in the process of making and distributing independent video, including documentary, animation, video art, student produced works, and other forms.

They examine and evaluate the range of different opinions represented in their interviews and make generalizations about the information they discover. This lesson plan is designed to take approximately three weeks in a traditional schedule of daily 45-minute periods for student groups of 30 to 35. It can be adapted for shorter time periods by selecting from among the sequence of activities described below.

Sequence of Activities:

A. In the classroom, students watch videotaped examples of local access programming and alternative video works selected by the instructor. Questions to discuss:

* What is the purpose of the work just shown?
* Who is the target audience for the work just shown?
* What makes these programs different from what is shown on local stations, the networks, or cable?
* In what ways are these programs similar to what is shown on local stations, networks or cable?
* Should these programs be judged by the same criteria you use to evaluate a good network program? Why or why not?

B. Students identify the location of the local access studio in their community by contacting City Hall. If possible, the instructor can arrange for a field trip so students can see the facilities. Students telephone the manager of the local access studio to develop a list of people in the community who have produced or been involved in community productions. If the community has a media arts center, teams of students engage in a parallel process for both organizations. Ideally, this list should represent the entire community of active (or formerly active) local access producers.

C. The instructor should invite one community producer or media artist to come to the class to help the students develop a set of open-ended questions to ask community producers. The purpose of the questions is to gather information about the variety of motivations that draw producers into the process of making a video and to gain more information about what it takes to make independent video. Some questions might include:

* How did you get started in community video?
* What do you like best and least about it?
* What obstacles have you faced in making a videotape?

D. Students work individually or in pairs to contact a community producer from the list provided and should audiotape the interview. If possible, a copy of the producer's most recent work would be useful to share with the class, too.

E. Final Project: Students can prepare a brief five-minute oral presentation that identifies the five to 10 most interesting points developed in the interview. Or students can write a feature story for a magazine or write the script for a radio interview using soundbites from the audiotape as well as original narration.

F. After the final project is shared among team members, students should critically examine the patterns of motivations that emerge concerning why people seek to make their own messages using a local access center or media arts organization. Using a blackboard, students can list common themes by identifying the economic, organizational, political, creative, and technological issues community producers face in the construction and distribution of their messages.

More things to try

Reforming TV

Paint a painting or make a collage on cardboard that will be attached to the TV. Leave a hole for part or all of the TV screen to poke through. When everyone has completed a project, take turns transforming the TV with your art piece and discuss how you feel it affects the viewing experience.

Video Installation: Altering your set

Another way to become conscious of our interpretations of television is to alter them by placing objects near, on, or in front of the TV to force us to reconsider the images which flicker across the screen. Students can bring in objects that can be used in conjunction with the television to create new "readings," (e.g., text, toys, clothing, gels, magnifying glass, mirrors, cassette recorders, and radios, etc.) Students should take photographs of their installations, carefully selecting the kind of image they want on the TV screen that will correspond to the objects they've selected.

Predictability and the unexpected in video art

Students watch a segment of *Amarillo News Tapes* by Doug Hall, Chip Lord, and Jody Proctor—in which the trio collaborate with Austin, Texas newsmen to blend documentary and parody in an analysis of news presentation and dissemination—and afterward discuss how the program differed from a traditional news program. How was it similar? Ask students to respond to the question: "What is your response when something happens that is unexpected?" Discuss issues including attention, motivation, anger, shock, disappointment, creativity, excitement, innovation, etc.

Excerpt from TV Eye: A Curriculum for the Media Arts, *an unpublished textbook by Renee Hobbs and Branda Miller available through the Boston Film/Video Foundation. The book, divided into three parts, introduces students to the business and history of commercial TV; the technology and aesthetics of the video medium; and the process of video production. It includes essays, lesson plans with hands-on activities, and suggestions for video projects, interviews, writing, and research.*

"Media education is often seen as a way of defending children from television. It ought to be seen as a way of giving them high expectations of television, of all media, and of themselves."

— CARY BAZALGETTE

comedies, comic strips, billboards, and popular music, enrich and strengthen the curriculum, or would it trivialize it? Would such activities help promote an appreciation of fine literature and the arts, or would the presence of the popular arts only make the fine arts seem even more disconnected and irrelevant in the minds of students?

After seeing a media literacy lesson that included an analysis of a clip from *The Gold Diggers of 1933*, an educator from an independent school sighed with relief while sitting next to me at a recent conference and said, "Well, finally, that's something I can do in my school—you know, it's not MTV or *Fresh Prince*." Many teachers feel that media education must focus on film history, video art, or other "high culture" products because these are preferable to challenging some of the issues embedded in the use of popular culture products.

Teachers must be responsive to a number of different obligations in designing curriculum, and many teachers are aware of some risks that may be involved in bringing the products of popular culture into the classroom, risks based on a fear of not meeting the expectations of parents, colleagues, and administrators to "deliver" appropriate curriculum. Nearly every media educator at a public school has a story to tell about the consequences of using popular culture products in school: lunchroom talk from teachers about the negative consequences of using non-traditional materials indicates that, in many communities, the systematic use of popular music, music video, comics, situation comedies, and talk shows as objects of analysis faces the risk of being misunderstood by parents, administrators, and members of some communities.



Courtesy Russ Gibb, Dearborn High School, Dearborn, MI

But the inclusion of diverse materials in the classroom has already emerged as a potent strategy for revitalizing education. Debates raged about the definition of culture throughout the 1980s at all levels of education. As Bazalgette writes, "Rethinking the term 'culture'... could have profound implications for education. It has to mean admitting new study objects to the curriculum, but it also ought to mean dividing up the curriculum differently... It would be necessary to devise conceptual frameworks for learning: types of knowledge and understanding rather than lists of things to be studied." It is no wonder the process of reaching consensus about this debate is likely to be gradual.

How to engage students?

There are two dominant instructional methods in media literacy. The first method consists of textual readings of media products, using concepts including representation, audience, institution, and genre to deconstruct and provide negotiated or oppositional readings to media texts. The second method consists of practical work in the production of messages, including the work of journalism education and video production activities. Predictably, in the United States textual reading occurs in language arts, English, or (sometimes) social studies classes, while practical work is most commonly found in video production classes, often in the vocational education program or (occasionally) in the art department. Many such programs are designed for "non-academic" students and are designed to keep kids in school without being unduly taxing on their intellectual skills. Some are explicitly targeted to reach at-risk students.

Media literacy can be effectively defined by its interest in connecting textual analysis with production activities. Both are essential components of a media literacy program, but each has its strengths and limitations. When textual analysis is the exclusive mode of inquiry, students may discover that regurgitating key phrases substitutes for thinking; and when video or print production activities serve as the central activity, students may engage in making bad copies of professional products with great attention to the cookbook "how to do it" instructions and little analysis or reflection on the process or product. Media artists and independent producers should work with educators to connect these still too often disparate approaches.

Finally, this essay cannot begin to cover an additional set of crucial curricular choices teachers must make: decisions about how and what to evaluate in terms of student learning. Again, because of the role of standardized testing in American education, teachers are obliged to design their curriculum in relation to the outcomes formally measured. However,

this brief review does convey the powerful way in which teacher autonomy combined with multiple competing obligations sustains diverse interpretations of media literacy.

Media education and school reform

In Great Britain and Canada, it is widely held that media education is a central component of both school reform and social change, because through the process of helping students acquire critical distance from forms of information and entertainment, students develop strategies for questioning, problem-solving, and reasoning which can be applied to all information forms, subject areas, and situations.

Media literacy makes it possible for teachers to change how and why they teach. The basic premises of media literacy serve to alter existing power relationships between student and teacher, and between reader and text. Media literacy opens to question the unchallenged "content delivery" approaches that have dominated education of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and, according to media theorist Neil Postman, media literacy engages teachers and students in the process of "de-mythologizing information," something that schools have never been able to do. Media literacy has the potential to allow educators to focus on student skills instead of subject areas, to permit teachers to serve as coaches and guides in mutually defined learning goals, and to help students engage in meaningful learning that stretches their ability to analyze and appreciate the rich cultural products found in texts, sounds, languages, and images of the past and the present.

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PORTFOLIO ASSESSMENT

The Tape's Great, But What Did They Learn?

STEVEN GOODMAN AND BILL TALLY

Why don't the City renovate abandoned buildings? 3/2/93

From my experience of seeing and living around abandoned buildings I can tell you that it cause drug dealers to use the places to sell drugs and it causes crime and unsanitary conditions. 3/3/93

Journal entries of Delroy Pratt, Educational Video Center documentary workshop student

How do you grade a video project? How do you know what a student such as Delroy has learned from documenting the conditions of his community? And once you know, how do you measure it? How do the students reflect on what they are learning? What are the standards they hold for themselves? How can private thoughts and ideas be known in a public way?

These are some of the questions we at the Educational Video Center (EVC) asked ourselves as we began to develop a model for assessing the performance of high school students in our documentary workshop program. In this article we describe the results of our two-year effort, led by workshop instructors Pam Sporn and Sonya Lynn, to answer these questions and construct a model for evaluating student production.

EVC is a media center training New York City high school students and their teachers in media production, and through it, media analysis. Students attend the documentary workshop four afternoons a week for a semester and earn school credit for their work. They learn to work together to research, shoot, and edit their own documentaries on community issues of importance to them.

As media educators, we are constantly making judgements about the quality of camerawork, editing, and research we expect from our students. Often the standards we set are based on our intuitive sense of what constitutes "good" work in terms of craft, creativity, and thoughtfulness. Efforts to use less subjective measures, such as multiple choice or fill-in-the-blank tests, tell us less about what the student knows than what he or she doesn't know. These tests don't tell us anything about what the student can actually do within the real-life context of a video production. And although the completed video work may reveal quite a lot about a student's technical skills and creative talent, it is often mute about his or her trajectory of growth and learning during the preproduction, production, and postproduction phases.

To develop a richer portrait of what students are capable of knowing and doing, and to help students observe their own progress as learners, the Educational Video Center has developed a model of what's called portfolio assessment for our student video workshops.

A growing number of educators in the national school reform movement are looking to the arts community for alternative models of learning. They are reaffirming some essential educational principles that arts teachers have long embraced. For example, they now recognize that students develop and exhibit a wide array of skills and abilities, including visual, oral, mechanical, musical, dramatic, interpretive, and reflective. They understand that students need to be exposed to a variety of learning styles, including creative project-based work, group work, and apprenticeships where they can observe and work alongside more experienced mentors. They also recognize that paper-based standardized tests are not necessarily appropriate measures of students growth and learning. And so they have developed the portfolio assessment model of gathering documents of student performance over time.

Media education programs have been increasingly pressed by funders and schools to evaluate the impact of their work. In response, we tend to write some combination of anecdotal accounts of students whose lives we claim to have changed, and statistical reports on the number of students who went on to study media in college or work in the field, etc. Ironically, media

Ironically, media arts instructors are largely unaware of the process of portfolio assessment that was adapted from the arts in the first place, and is now used so effectively by many classroom teachers.

arts instructors are largely unaware of the process of portfolio assessment that was adapted from the arts in the first place, and is now used so effectively by many classroom teachers. To address this need, the Nathan Cummings Foundation funded EVC to develop an assessment model that could be shared with the media arts community.

A portfolio is essentially a collection of student work that exhibits a student's efforts, accomplishments, and growth over time. The use of the portfolio as a way to gauge what students learn is based on the work of education researchers around the country, including such leaders in school reform as the Coalition for Essential Schools, Project Zero at Harvard, and the National Center for Restructuring Education, Schools, and Teaching (NCREST) at Teacher's College in New York City.

But long before researchers discovered portfolios, artists have been keeping records of their work, from first sketches through pencil drawings to final paintings. Filmmakers, too, keep notebooks and journals recording the inner process of their work. Spike Lee's notebooks, as an example, have become widely-distributed publications. Artists such as Lee collect their work as part of a life-long process of self-evaluation that then informs their work in the future. As researcher Dennie Palmer Wolf writes in *Educational Leadership*, "Whatever the medium, the message is the same: thinkers and inventors often keep longitudinal collections of their ideas, drafts, and questions. They use these as a kind of storehouse of possibilities for later work, valuing them as a record of where they have been and reading them for a sharp sense of their own signatures and uncertainties." Taking this lead, classroom teachers in the humanities and sciences have been refining ways to collect and analyze records of performance to build reliable portraits of student growth over time.

To adapt this method to our production classes, we examined a range of student work—tapes, research notes, journal entries—and created an inventory of the skills and the habits of thinking and working that we believed students were developing through the documentary-making process. For example, a student's journal entry recorded the first day out on a shoot:

I was the cameraman and I was focusing and zooming on all the abandoned buildings. I felt weird with a camera in a neighborhood I didn't know... I felt proud that I was calling the shots. I think I did pretty good. I learned shots like tilting and panning. Basically it was sort of stressful getting the perfect shot since my arm was hurting but I did it and I know it was worth it. Also, I got mad since everybody was walking slow and pulling on the wire. I kept telling everyone to hurry up. But they kept pulling. It was hard but it was worth it. 3/8/93

Journal entry of David Fuentes.

For anyone who thinks back to his or her early experiences of learning to be a camera operator out on location, this is a familiar story, complete with feelings of frustration, pride, and accomplishment. Our task was to take such examples—a day in the life of our students—and tease apart the interwoven strands of experience: those technical skills the students were experimenting with for the first time, interpersonal skills they were applying to conditions of collaborative work, reflections on media representations of community, and so on. Our list included the following areas of academic, artistic, and interpersonal growth: camerawork, editing, critical viewing, research, writing, interviewing, public speaking, group work, community activism, and self-esteem.

We grouped the various skills and areas of learning into six categories: technical skills, research, writing, editing, critical viewing, and public speaking. The goals we came up with for assessment are:

- To provide students with the skills, knowledge, and confidence necessary to become independent thinkers and creative media artists.
- To document students' performance on multiple tasks over time.
- To integrate performance assessment with classroom instruction.
- To provide information on which to base on-going development of curriculum that is responsive to student needs.

For each area of learning that we were assessing, we identified records of student work that could be used as evidence of growth and learning. Records include rough and final videotape, journal entries, interview questions, storyboards, critical reviews, and music or graphics. A single piece of work might exemplify different kinds of performance. A rough-cut videotape, for example, could show progress in camerawork, interviewing, or editing. A written review of a film might be a source for improvement in



Photo: Corky Lee, courtesy Educational Video Center, New York, NY

EDITING PORTFOLIO

Editing is more than just pushing buttons.
It means telling a story with images and sounds.

In this portfolio

collect at least three of the following:

- A group of still images, arranged in a sequence that tells a story
- Storyboards for your practice project or final tape
- A segment of videotape (rough or final) from your group's work
- Any videotape from EVC, TV, or other producers that gives you editing ideas for your own work
- Your edit plan proposal (written and/or drawn)
- Other visual art (charts, graphics, titles), original or otherwise, that you have used in your piece
- Music or sound effects you have created for your tape

Five things proficient editing does:

- Tells a story with a beginning, middle, and end
- Tells a story that is relevant and meaningful to a youth audience
- Maintains consistent sound levels
- Edits are clean
- Edits are logical in content (idea, dialogue) and composition (framing, camera movement)

Four things masterful editing does:

- Presents **central themes** in a coherent and compelling way
- **Advances the story** even with the sound off
- **Layers images** (action, titles, effects) **and sounds** (dialogue, narration, music, effects) in ways that add ideas or feelings to the story
- Uses **rhetorical techniques** such as: point/counterpoint, emphasis, contrast or contradiction, building tension expanding or contracting time

writing technique, critical analysis of media, and the process of research.

The Production Notebook that EVC students keep became a cornerstone of our portfolio approach. The notebook has sections in which students record their day-to-day accomplishments and reflect on the way things are going. It is also a place where significant work happens—from drafting interview questions to creating an edit plan. Journal entries, in particular, reveal how students use and develop a range of skills and experiences through the step-by-step discipline of documentary research and production. The following entries chronicle David Fuentes' efforts to locate, contact, and interview officials from the New York City housing authority for a tape on abandoned buildings:

Today I went & looked in the blue pages of the white pages directory phone book. Looking for phone #'s or any info. on abandoned buildings & I found many numbers on housing authority and complaints. Now I plan to call them tomorrow and find out any info. I hope they give a lot of info I need and info for the rest of the group. 3/23/93

Today Shamika & I contacted the [office of] Housing Preservation Development & she told us to write her a letter with all of our questions and fax it to her. I didn't make the phone call but I helped Shamika in the writing of the business letter in the computer. 3/24/93

Today I called the Community Service Society and they kept putting me on hold & sending me to different places, then they said that the 2 important people would call back. Before I made this call I & Shamika sent a fax to H.P.D. with all the questions we needed to be answered. Well an hour passed or 45 min. and the man called from C.S.S.... he told me he just made a report about this problem & that he will mail it to us. So that was perfect. 3/29/93

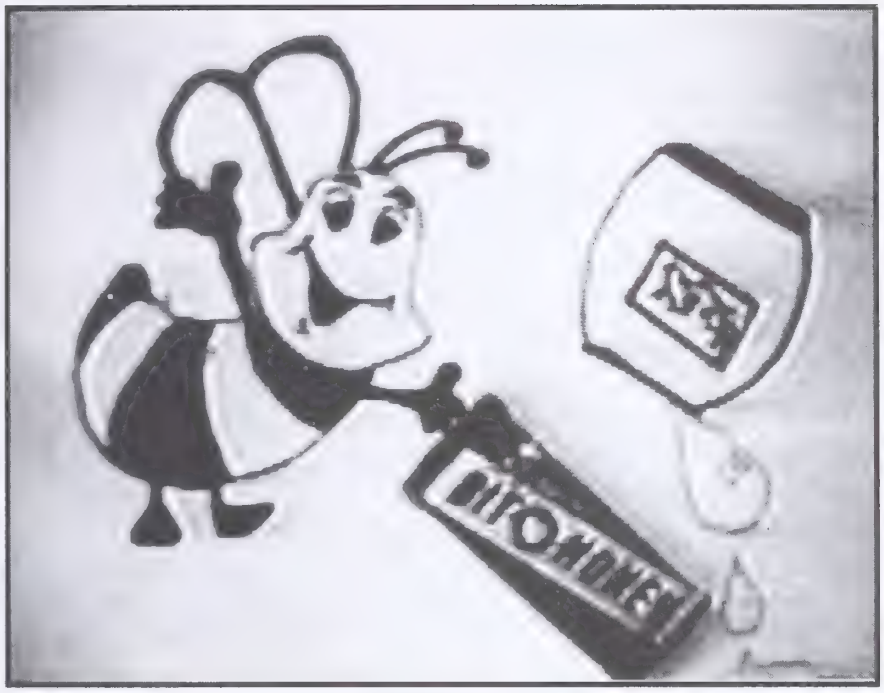
Yesterday we went to interview Valerie Jo Bradley who is in charge of Public relations. Finally, someone from H.P.D. to represent the city! I was not surprised to find that Ms. Bradley had an attitude, but I was surprised to find that she didn't believe in the Abandonment problem. I couldn't believe it! Where was she looking & talking about? Is she blind? But this was great footage for us so we can show our viewers that Housing Preservations & Development is uncaring, self centered organization that doesn't give a damn if an old lady living by herself has to push a shopping kart up 9 flights of stairs because her elevator is broken or that mildew is growing & is unhealthy to breathe and live with in an apt. with children who play but don't know what is going on. But still getting all this footage is important. At first I never thought we would get the interview with Valerie Jo Bradley but if it wasn't for me who wrote & faxed her the letter then the interview wouldn't have been possible. 5/12/93

David may seem unusually articulate; in fact, he is rather typical of EVC students. What is significant, however, is that even without such a rich written record, David's portfolio can give multiple testimony to the learning process he has gone through: in the Research portfolio are names and numbers of organizations he has found; in the Public Speaking portfolio are phone logs that demonstrate his persistence in getting a response; in the Writing portfolio are the business letter he helped write and the interview questions he drafted; and in the Interviewing portfolio is a copy of his taped interview with the housing official.

Students are responsible for gathering three or more pieces of work such as these in each of the six portfolio areas during the course of a term. We have found that for the collection process to be well-integrated into daily work, the portfolios must be easily accessible and the criteria of good work must be public. Each portfolio is separated by a cover sheet indicating criteria for proficiency or mastery in that area (see box). The students' written records are collected in special portfolio sections of their daily notebooks. Video segments are kept on personal tapes that are stored nearby. In addition, performance criteria are posted throughout the work space, so students and teachers may refer to them easily.

But gathering work is not enough. Students and staff must understand how each student is evolving. At EVC we try to have frequent conversations

around the work students do, and we try to make our thinking about what constitutes *good* work explicit in these conversations. First, instructors and staff mentors make periodic comments on the growing portfolios, both in personal conferences with students and in marginal notations in the portfolios, giving students needed personal feedback. Even more important, however, are the opportunities students have to present their work to an audience: from reading their writing aloud before a group, to screening rough work for staff and family, to debating final edit plans. These experiences with an audience have a lasting impact on students, as Delroy Pratt testifies:



Courtesy Brenda Miller and the Henry Street Settlement, New York, NY

As I sat and watched my practice project as part of an audience I felt amused with delight and astonishment, and with great concern of what the other people might say or comment about it, and the reactions on their faces, to see whether they like it or not. And to my surprise, it was very helpful to see and hear the different questions that were answered and asked. 3/18/93

As media artists, the insightful criticisms of our colleagues in rough-cut screenings and other forums are essential to the process of deepening our work. Ultimately, conversations around portfolios can help shape a *culture of self-reflection and critique* that students can internalize. As David reflects on his work while logging it:

I finally finished [logging] the tape & what I think is the best footage out of the whole tape is when Nigel and Valerie were arguing about Bed Sty having the most Abandoned Buildings & Valerie saying that Bed Sty doesn't have a high rate of Abandonment. Also she stated there wasn't an abandonment problem...This is good footage to me. We can show the viewers with visuals the Abandoned buildings that are in Bed Sty. 5/17/93

Here David has moved from observing and recording a situation, to making a judgement about what is important to the work, to planning where to go next—how to realize his idea visually. It is worth noting that the logsheet alone in a portfolio would not give us access to David's thinking; it provides a *scaffold* that helps him build verbal annotation, in this case, through a journal entry.

This leads us to a final consideration: once the portfolio process has convinced us that growth is indeed happening, that students are learning to think critically and to be creative, how do we offer proof that will help convince others? We have tried to develop criteria for judging the qualities of student performance that are easily understandable and easy for anyone to apply.

At the end of the term, students choose two of their portfolios to present to a panel of staff, peers, and community members who judge them as either proficient or masterful based on the specific criteria listed in the portfolios' cover sheets. Students describe each piece of work and why they chose it, give their own self-assessment, and answer questions from the audience. A summary of the panel and student assessments is then written up, and a copy of the portfolio and sample reel go with the student when she or he leaves the program to help demonstrate to others what they have done.

Building a culture of self-reflection via portfolio assessment is an evolutionary process, and it may be some time before we have a method that will convince the most skeptical outsider that a student is really growing and learning. In the meantime, there are built-in challenges that this kind of assessment must face in media arts settings. First, it is very time-consuming for both students and instructors. Time spent reflecting is time not spent producing, and this presents problems for deadline-oriented production work. Second, video production is highly collaborative in nature, and this means that assessment of *individuals* must rely heavily on personal journals and other written work that is not always stressed in media arts programs. Finally, well-developed standards for judging media work do not exist, and so must initially be created by individual media arts programs, according to their own goals and values. Only over time, as rubrics are shared, can a wider consensus about standards be shaped.

Our two-year experiment with portfolio assessment at EVC has shown promise in several directions. We have seen our curriculum strengthened, as instructors are now more thoroughly integrating writing and critical viewing activities throughout the production process. We have seen students become more aware of the expectations and goals we have for them, as well as their own goals for themselves. We have seen students engage in more self-reflection and self-critique. And we have seen students who are more articulate at the end of the term about the range of things they have learned and their own learning process.

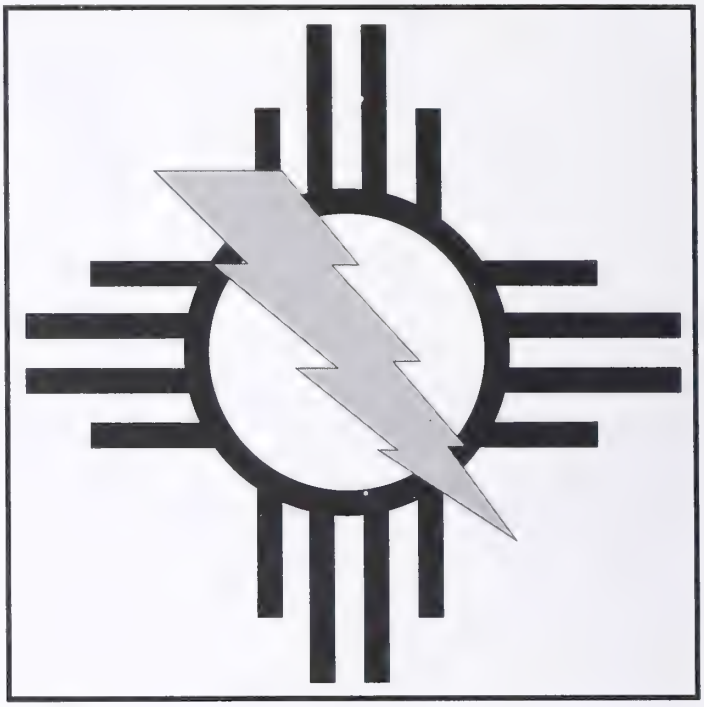
Portfolio assessment, at its best, may give students and teachers a richer sense of how far they have come, as this journal entry from David attests:

I felt we work together as a team and we all shared equal partnership as a team, and I felt proud as a student going back in my community and making the community be aware about the destruction of their building and their neighborhood. 3/3/93

Yet the real value of this knowledge about the past lies in the ways it shapes and encourages action in the future, as Delroy testifies:

On T.V. young people like myself are portray as Bad Guys and as con artists...I would like to do [videos] on teenagers and the basic stuff that affect their lives...things that concern me in my community. 3/17/93

Steven Goodman is the founder and executive director of Educational Video Center in New York City. Bill Tally is a media researcher and designer with the Center for Children and Technology, a division of the Educational Development Center.



THE CUTTING EDGE

The National Media Literacy Project

New Mexico breaks ground with statewide pilot program

KANDICE MCDONALD

At Zuni High School in New Mexico, some teachers and students are wondering what's going on inside Lori-Ann Hickox's classroom, from which a television regularly glows, and students come and go with video cameras in tow. "They understand that the crazy woman down the hall has got the television on again," 30-year-old Hickox says. "But they don't really understand what we're doing in there."

What Hickox is doing is teaching the first media consumption class at Zuni High School. Hickox, who also teaches world history and language arts, designed the class' curriculum after she decided to "face reality." Her students, most of whom are from the Zuni tribe and live on the west central New Mexico reservation, were reading about King Arthur and Robin Hood and "they just couldn't get it," says Hickox. She decided to show them films about the Arthurian period. "I know how powerful the visual medium is, but this was the first time I considered it as a way to reach them." In the process, she realized that she was never told how to use or teach media in the classroom. She came up with a media consumption curriculum and successfully pitched it to her school principal.

Because of that work, Hickox was asked to join 14 other New Mexico high school teachers from school districts across the state to participate in a pilot project that is placing New Mexico on the cutting edge of media education.

In 1986 New Mexico's State Department of Education began requiring that communications be incorporated into the core curriculum of the state's high schools. While the state approved this mandate, it had no functional framework or curriculum model to realize this goal.

In stepped the National Media Literacy Project, founded by Deirdre Downs, executive director of the Downs Media Education Center. Because the state is also involved in educational reform, the so-called "Re-Learning" initiative that will be developed over the next three years, Downs saw this as an opportune moment to introduce a pilot program for statewide media education. New Mexico also seemed an attractive site for a pilot because it offers a diverse population of Hispanics, Anglos, and Native Americans, and because its sparse population (1.5 million) and relatively few school districts (88) make a statewide program feasible.

The National Media Literacy Project's goal is to have media education included in all New Mexico high schools in the next three years and eventually to incorporate it in elementary through post-secondary educational curricula. "We looked around and noticed that the [media education] movement was going slowly," Downs says. "We heard of individual teachers and organizations teaching it disparately. So we decided we needed to bring the ideas together in a comprehensive project."

Downs went to the State Superintendent of Public Instruction with a proposal for a media education program that had been approved by the Downs Media Education Center's board of directors, including media scholar Neil Postman and *20/20*'s Hugh Downs (father of Deirdre Downs). After getting the thumbs up from New Mexico's State Department of Education and its Department of Labor, Downs asked Kathleen Tyner of Strategies for Media Literacy in San Francisco and Deborah Leveranz of Southwest Alternate Media Project in Houston to collaborate on teacher training. New Mexico Governor Bruce King also enthusiastically endorsed the project, whose only real cost is in training. The project was launched in March with a conference and a week of teacher training in Albuquerque.

The 15 original "catalyst teachers" and at least four others who have since joined the project will receive an additional two weeks of instruction this summer and will eventually train other educators. The program already has a waiting list of teachers who want to be involved. It is also closely watched by administrators in states like Kentucky, Texas, and North Carolina that are currently involved in educational reform and may follow New Mexico's lead.

Hickox's classes already reflect some of the project's goals. During the first nine weeks of class, she emphasizes the history of printed media. Her students make their own newspapers, magazines, and short books. During the second nine weeks, they learn about the history of radio and produce a 15-minute radio program with music and news items. She next focuses on television, having students discuss propaganda techniques, advertising, and Nielsen ratings. They spend three days analyzing TV programs, looking, for instance, at the percentage of Whites, Hispanics, and Native Americans depicted and what religions are portrayed. Her students then produce their own 30-minute videos.

Students work harder and their grades shoot up, Hickox says, and, more important, they begin thinking more critically about what they are doing. "We talk about the portrayal of Native Americans in mass media, like on

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Strike a pose: Skip Blumberg's *Pick Up Your Feet: The Double Dutch Show* was one of several independent productions that the Downs Media Institute has introduced to teachers in New Mexico.

Photo: Peter Aaron/Esto, courtesy WNET

Northern Exposure. They can point out different stereotypical behaviors," she says. "They don't like it, but they say, 'What can we do about it?' I think as they're starting to understand what's behind the stereotypes, they are understanding what they *can* do about it." The students come to understand how a stereotype materializes and how a producer gets messages across, whether through the characters' clothing, the way others treat them, their accents or jobs, she says. "They know I expect them to think, to analyze, and come up with solutions. They say, 'Okay, maybe Native Americans aren't portrayed because we're not a big economic force.' And then they say, 'We're going to show them how big an economic force we are.'"

What is more, their creativity has blossomed, observes Hickox. One student is making a documentary about the history of jewelry-making in her family; another is researching aspects of Zuni mythology. Others are tackling social issues, such as teen pregnancy on the reservation and drug abuse among the Zuni and Native Americans—problems that lead students back to self-image issues. "You cannot teach self-esteem," Hickox says. "But you can give them the tools by which to build better self-esteem. By doing what they're doing in this class, the kids really feel they have a sense of power, that they have a voice."

Understanding the mass media's economic underpinnings and its cultural, psychological, and even physiological impact is the core of the pilot project's definition of media literacy. Downs says that one problem in bringing people to an understanding of media literacy is that they simplify it as merely deconstruction or having students play with cameras.

"For me the most rewarding aspect of teaching media literacy classes is when we get into values issues," Downs says. "Kids have all of this information pouring into their lives from cultural environments. Because we haven't given them the skills with which to process this tidal wave of information, they just absorb it. They don't know their values. It can be very confusing to be over-mediated and to somehow have this feeling that 'I should have the latest Nikes and the latest clothing.' If you don't have a strong values framework, it can be difficult, for example, to refrain from taking out a gun and shooting your neighbor for his Nikes. We really believe that many of our social problems are traceable to being media illiterate."

With more training, teachers will learn to go beyond traditional mass media. Along with computers, video games, billboards, and other mainstream media, alternative, independent film and video productions will be a part of the curriculum. Such work will become crucial in the process of helping kids produce their own media messages, says Downs. "Watching independently produced films breaks them away from an atrophied imagination, which is a result of commercially driven filmmakers' work," she notes. "With repeated exposure to independent filmmakers, the kids get some of their imagination back."

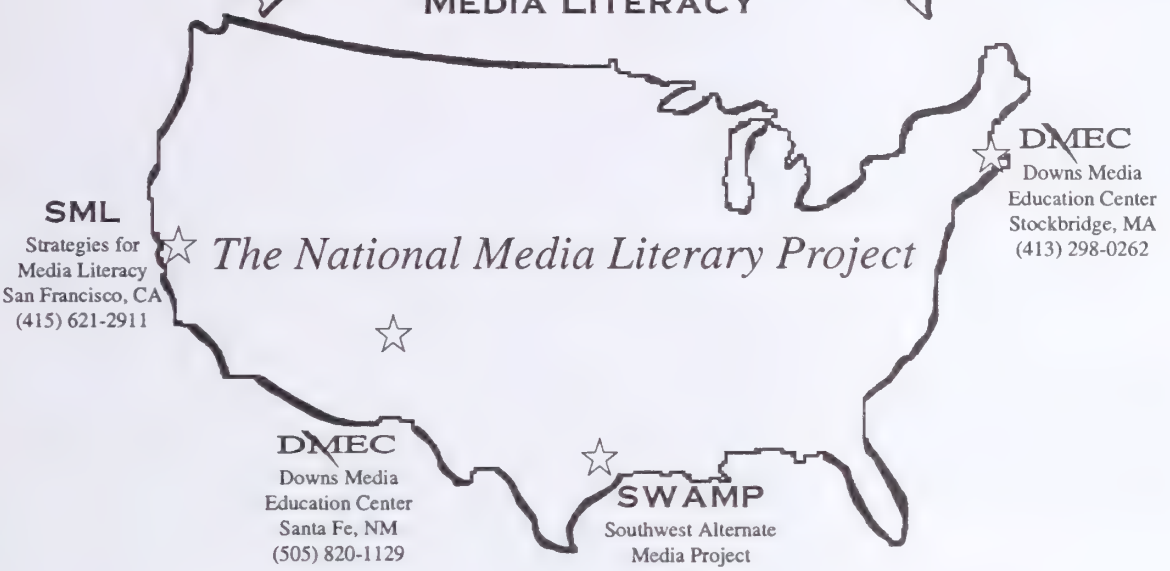
Alternative and mainstream media were used and compared in teacher training, reports Downs of the March and summer training sessions. Works by video artists Marlon Riggs, Skip Blumberg, and other independents were introduced to teachers. Once the program is in place, organizers hope each school district will invest in a central tape library stocked with independent work. They will provide a resource list of nonprofit distributors, like Women Make Movies, New Day Films, Video Data Bank, Frameline, and other members of the Independent Media Distributors' Association (IMDA). In addition to aiding the teachers, it could be a whole new market for IMDA members, Leveranz points out. The National Media Literacy Project is also developing ways for teachers to work with local media artists, as well as regional film schools and public access centers.

In Silver City, New Mexico, some 200 miles south of Zuni, another teacher in the project, 43-year-old Christy Miller, is teaching media literacy skills through a mock trial; her students are researching the 1950s Communist scare and Joseph McCarthy. The students watch *Salt of the Earth* (1953), a dramatic feature about a labor union strike in a mining community near Silver City in the 1950s. The film's director, producer, screenwriter, and star were all blacklisted in Hollywood for alleged Communist sympathies. "That film and other things we've watched help them get a feel for how the media at that time, and now, can be so powerful," says Miller. She also showed them *Red Dawn* (1984), the Reagan-era feature about small-town teens turning into guerilla fighters when Communists invade the United States. Miller used it to generate discussion about the fear of communism, the domino theory, and the use of media in the McCarthy era and more recently.

"Whether it be a textbook, a movie, a short story, or poetry, what you're trying to get across is how literate you become when you 'read' this stuff. Whether you're studying the McCarthy era or math, it all comes down to being literate," Miller says. "I'm finding my students are really excited about it. We discuss women's issues, democracy versus other forms of government." She adds, "Five years ago, I would not have been able to do this."

Kandice McDonald is associate editor at the Albuquerque Monthly.

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(704) 255-0182

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Teaching Tools to Go

Established in Los Angeles in 1989 as an expansion of the quarterly *Media & Values* magazine, the Center for Media and Values recognizes that the media plays a pivotal role in our global culture. In trying to promote new ways of thinking about media, the center has developed numerous teaching materials for educating both children and adults.

Each thematic issue of *Media & Values* is repackaged as a *Media Literacy Workshop Kit* for use with grades 7 to 12, as well as adult church and community groups. Kits include *Living in the Image Culture* ($49.95), which helps integrate media literacy into educational programs, *Break the Lies that Bind* ($21.95), a six-session kit exploring how advertising and media influence perceptions of beauty and body image, and *Parenting in a TV Age* ($21.95), which helps parent groups explore issues involving children and television. Included in each kit are lesson plans, handout masters, group activities, and an occasional video resource.

The center's strategy has been described as "part missionary work, part grassroots organizing." Its current membership stands at 1,500 individuals and organizations. Individual memberships for teachers, parents, and concerned media consumers cost $30/year. Organizational memberships are $95 and national nonprofit groups and industry supporters may contribute between $250 and $5,000/year.

For further information, contact the center at 1962 S. Shenandoah St., Los Angeles, CA 90034 or call (213) 559-2944.

Printed Matter

Periodicals

Adbusters. A quarterly publication of the Media Foundation, 1243 W. 7th Ave., Vancouver, BC V6H 1B7. Canada. (604) 736-9401. Subscription/ Membership: $35 Canadian currency.

Mediacy. The newsletter of the Canadian Association for Media Literacy. 40 McArthur St., Weston, Ontario, M3P 3M7. Canada. (416) 394-6992. Subscription/ Membership: $30 Canadian currency.

Media Matters. From the Assembly for Media Education, National Council of Teachers of English. $10 with NCTE membership. (319) 588-5172.

Media & Values. Magazine of the Center for Media and Values. 1962 S. Shenandoah Street, Los Angeles, CA 90034. (213) 559-2944. Center also has a workshop series on media topics.

Media MessAge. Train of Thought, Inc. 6409 152nd Ave. NE, Redmond, WA 98052. (206) 883-1544. Subscription: $15.

Metro. The quarterly magazine of the Australian Teachers of Media. P.O. Box 204, Albert Park, Victoria 3206. Australia. $70 Australian currency for one year.

Strategies. Quarterly newsletter for K-12 teachers of media. Strategies for Media Literacy, 1095 Market Street, Ste 410, San Francisco, CA 94103. (415) 621-

2911. Subscription: $15, Teachers; $25, organizations. International, add $5.

Telemedium. The National Telemedia Council, 120 E. Wilson St., Madison, WI. 53703. (608) 257-7712. Subscription/Membership: $20.

Zillions: Consumer Reports for Kids. Bi-monthly magazine from Consumers Union that helps kids evaluate products. Subscriptions, $13.95. (914) 378-2000.

Suggested Reading

Bright Ideas Series: Media Education. An excellent Scholastics text for elementary teachers. Scholastics Inc., POB 7501, Jefferson City, MO 65102. (800) 325-6149. Order # 76296. $14.95.

Considine, D. & Haley, G. ***Visual Messages: Integrating Imagery into Instruction.*** A text designed for a variety of classroom applications. Rich in visual illustration and practical classroom applications, this book is a media education must. Libraries Unlimited, Box 3988, Englewood CO 80155-3988. (303) 770-1220. $26.50.

Costanzo, W. ***Reading the Movies: Twelve Great Films and How to Teach Them.*** (1992) NCTE, 111 Kenyon Ave., Urbana, IL.

Lewis, Barbara A. ***The Kid's Guide to Social Action.*** Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit Publishing, 1991. Contains an excellent chapter on media, consumer action and democratic citizenship skills. (800) 735-7323. $14.95.

KRCB Media Literacy Project. An elementary workbook complete with tapes and black-line masters. By teachers for teachers, it is a good example of how teachers have integrated media literacy into the curriculum. Highly recommended. KRCB-TV, 5850 LaBath Avenue, Rohnert Park, CA 94928. (707) 585-8522. $15.

Lloyd-Kolkin, D. & Tyner, K. ***Media & You.*** An elementary activity guide with lesson plans, resources, parent information, and more. Can be used for some secondary applications. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Educational Technology Publications, 1991. $29.95. Can also be ordered from Strategies for Media Literacy, Inc., 1095 Market St., Ste 410, San Francisco, CA 94103. (415) 621-2911.

The Media Literacy Resource Guide. Required reading for Canadian teachers, this affordable guide is an excellent resource for U.S. secondary teachers. Also available in French. Government of Ontario Bookstore Publications, 880 Bay Street, 5th fl., Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1N8, Canada. Send $7.

Singer J. & Singer, D. ***Creating Critical Viewers.*** A comprehensive 10-lesson kit with video component. Excellent resource from Pacific Mountain Network. Contact your local PBS station, or PMN, 1550 Park Ave., Denver, CO 80218-1661. (303) 837-8000.

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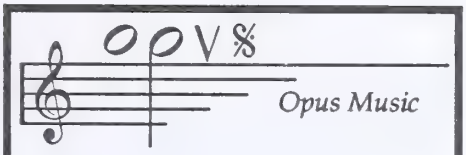
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Media Center-based Training

A P P A L S H O P

Whitesburg, Kentucky



Courtesy Appalshop

There are two common models for media education: one is based inside the schools—the artist-in-residence approach. The other is externally based, in which students from various schools travel to a media arts center or some outside organization to take advantage of its programs. Deep in the Appalachian hills of Kentucky, a program offered by the media arts center Appalshop successfully combines these two approaches.

The Appalachian Media Institute (AMI) was created in 1988 under the direction of media instructor Jeff Hawkins. "Its mission," Hawkins explains, "is to teach local young folks how to use media to tell their own stories." Hawkins' two-part program begins with the Summer Institute, an intensive five-week session held at Appalshop, and then continues inside participating high schools during the academic year. What makes the program particularly effective is that it trains teachers as well as students, and it is built on the principle that media education is not a one-course enterprise, but requires long-term follow through.

Every year AMI selects approximately 10 juniors and seniors, each with a sponsoring teacher who also goes through training at Appalshop. The Summer Institute workshops, all taught by Appalshop staff, cover the technical aspects of preproduction, production, and editing, interview techniques, audience development, plus the different approaches to documentary and fiction and the importance of collaborative and study skills. They screen media art and youth-produced works. Then students pair up to produce their own independent projects, with instructors as mentors.

The teachers, meanwhile, can choose to attend either a five-day workshop or the full five-week course. AMI's goal is "to develop their capacity to facilitate a media course," says Hawkins. The program has attracted a variety of teachers from about eight high schools in the Appalachian region of Kentucky; language arts predominates, but teachers of art, English, vocational education, special education, and even math have attended. Teacher training includes one day of curriculum development with media as a central focus during the summer, plus two additional days of program development during the academic year. The teachers, who must agree to incorporate media into their classes in some way, receive $500 for their year-long participation and can apply for flexible professional development hours for this training.

When the summer is over, the students continue the program in their respective schools, working with their teacher-sponsors. Several schools offer two years of courses in production and media analysis. Those students in schools without any dedicated media classes produce work in conjunction with courses in other disciplines. One student worked with his environmental studies class on a tape about recyling, another on polluted dump sites. A history teacher utilized his student to help the class produce a tape about local involvement in the Civil War. A media class collaborated with an English honors class while they were studying Appalachian culture to produce *Soap, Soap, Soap*, a video based on an old Appalachian folktale. The media students did the camera and editing, and the English students wrote the script.

AMI continues to provide support to each student-educator team, while the students teach their fellow students how to produce videotapes and radio programs. This concept of kids teaching other kids comes from AMI's commitment to "make education active and inclusive for the participants, the students, and teachers," says Hawkins.

Some schools sponsor students to the Summer Institute repeatedly, and some are beginning to send multiple teachers and students. When this happens, "another cell has been created," says Hawkins. These are schools that will eventually offer the two-year media education course modeled on Hawkins' program at Whitesburg High School, where he teaches during the academic year. Next fall, between two and eight more high schools will be offering similar courses, and AMI is developing relations with additional schools. Media education is slowly being introduced into the schools as part of the Kentucky Educational Reform Act, passed by the state legislature in 1990, which stipulates that real world opportunities be incorporated into the classroom.

Once produced, the tapes are seen in the schools, on local cable access channels, and at the video rental stores. In a unique arrangement, AMI makes free dubs available at the stores. Viewers are then

asked to fill out a questionnaire, which allows students to get feedback. The students' tapes have proven so popular that people take them home and don't bring them back. AMI is in the process of rethinking this distribution effort.

ROBIN WHITE

Forming a Media Arts Department

EPISCOPAL HIGH SCHOOL

Houston, Texas

Lauryn Axelrod has been teaching video production and media literacy in Houston since 1987. But like many media education teachers, she would come into the schools for a three-week residency, then be gone, and the students would have no follow-up.

In 1991 Axelrod brought a different plan to the headmaster of Episcopal High School. She picked this school because it was a relatively new private school that offered as many arts classes as academic ones and had a room full of idle 3/4" equipment. She proposed creating an academic, year-round media program, with courses building from introductory to advanced. By September 1992 Axelrod was teaching a video course within the school's Visual Arts Department and making guest appearances in English, Ethics, and other classes.

This year, Episcopal offers Introduction to Media, Journalism, Video, Special Projects in Media, and for-credit work on the school newspaper and with ETV, the school's student production company. Enrollment has taken off, and the program has grown into Houston's first separate Media Arts Department in a high school. "It took me a year, but they realized that, while video crosses all of the art forms—it's a synthesis, a hybrid—it doesn't really belong in the Visual Arts Department or the Theater Department or the Dance Department. It needed to be its own department," says Axelrod.

Axelrod's students are "a mixed bag, ethnically and academically," she says, ranging from National Honor Society members to the learning disabled. She makes it clear to all that what she offers is not vocational training. "It's different because it's media literacy-based. I tell the kids on the first day, 'I'm not training you to become Steven Spielberg. You can do that in college. I'm going to grade you not on your talent, but on how well you learn to look at stuff differently.' It's just amazing to see how the kids come in thinking, 'Well, I saw it on the news, so it must be true,' and leave the Intro to Video class saying, 'I don't think that's true anymore.'"

Axelrod, a documentary filmmaker, shows them as much independent film and video as her daily 45-minute class period will allow. Next year visiting media artists will be invited to show their work and discuss their approaches to making media. Independent work is what the students identify with. "They come to realize that the work they're doing is not mainstream work; number one, they're kids; number two, they don't have the access or the money," Axelrod notes. "I make it clear to them I don't want any imitations. I won't even let them produce something unless they can tell me where it came from." One senior made a tape on teens and guns after her brother was killed by a little boy playing with his father's gun. An affluent African American teen made a video on the effect of gangs. "Just because his mom's a doctor and he drives a BMW, does that make him free from it?" Axelrod recalls, "He actually had a video camera with him when a cop stopped him for doing nothing, except that he was a young black male driving a fancy car," a telling encounter that was incorporated into the video.

Some media training occurs in conjunction with academic courses. In a Government class last year, Axelrod taught a two-day unit on media ethics and another on political advertising, during which the students produced their own polispots. A teacher of modern European history contacted Axelrod this summer about helping with a section on the French Revolution by having the students produce a newscast "live from the barricades." One senior did her final paper for English class as



Courtesy Episcopal High School

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Unlike most high schools, Episcopal offers a sequence of media courses from freshman to senior year. The Introduction to Media course, which Axelrod team-teaches with a journalist, is the prerequisite to all subsequent courses. Students can then choose between a print or video track, with a journalism class leading to work on the school newspaper or yearbook, or a video production class leading to work with ETV. The print and video students often collaborate through the Special Projects in Media courses.

ETV, which has become "a prestige thing" for the students, says Axelrod, started out as a forum for showing the students' work before the entire school during the morning assembly period. This coming year it will expand into a monthly 35-minute video magazine about school and community issues. Houston public television station KUHT has expressed interest in airing this work, as have some of the local museums and galleries. The only obstacle, says Axelrod, is that they haven't had time to devise a magazine format for the show. "I'm planning to let the kids do that this year," she says.

The equipment they have to work with is relatively ample. Axelrod oversaw the design and renovation of an entire floor of an old convent building, which now houses the video post-production facility. This includes four cameras, a 3/4" editing system with the Pinnacle special effects generator, and an S-VHS editing system. There is also a dark room, a print shop where the school newspaper and yearbook are produced, CD players, and a computer laboratory, which is part of a state-mandated program to teach computer literacy.

Given the popularity of the media arts program, they may need more space and equipment soon. During the pilot year, the media students were primarily seniors. "They didn't have the movement from freshman through seniors," Axelrod says. This year she has 120 incoming freshman, and all have signed up for the Introduction to Media course in the fall. "The program has just expanded exponentially."

PATRICIA THOMSON

Teaching teachers

APPALACHIAN STATE

Boone, North Carolina

"Media is an alternative school in this country," says David Considine, a self-described media literacy missionary. "We're teaching teachers that mass media teaches kids." Considine runs the only university-based teacher training program in the country that prepares teachers to teach about media. The program is housed at the Reich College of Education, Appalachian State University (ASU) in Boone, North Carolina.



Courtesy Appalachian State University

Just two years ago, ASU's Department of Curriculum and Instruction declared critical viewing a "core competency," that is, a skill students had to have before they could graduate. Each of the college's yearly 400-500 graduating students now take a course called Media and Learning. Considine describes it as a radical departure from traditional teaching-with-media instruction. As in the past, student-teachers learn to make overheads, dub tapes, and patch a VCR; but now they also learn to teach *about* media. Rather than learn just technical skills, students are taught how to spot stereotypes, read between the lines of newspapers, and become sensitized to advertising strategies.

Although ASU's emphasis is on preparing student teachers for the classroom, Considine also teaches workshops for instructors already in the classroom. Teachers often complain about being overburdened with curricular requirements, but no such complaints arise with respect to media literacy, Considine says. They may be a little uncertain at first, he admits, because they haven't been given the skills and resources they need to teach critical viewing, but there's no question as to the value of the curriculum. "Teachers are aware that media is part of the air they breathe," he adds.

As the first teaching institution to embrace media literacy, Appalachian State's program is something of a milestone. Considine believes that the strategic future of media literacy needs to be linked to education reform, a broad-based movement among educators to redefine how and what schools teach. Media literacy develops the same skills, he says. It teaches students to evaluate and process information, fosters critical thinking, and encourages students to examine perceptions of race, culture, and ethnicity that are emphasized in multicultural curricula.

Another strategic issue for media literacy advocates is whether media education should be treated as a separate subject or be integrated into existing curricula. Considine argues that media literacy can strengthen traditional literacy and should be incorporated into existing subject areas. A lesson on nutrition, for instance, lends itself to an examination of the advertising, logos, and marketing of fast foods. News analysis, he says, can be integrated into a social studies unit.

One issue that Considine admits comes up regularly with teachers is whether media literacy is part of an implicitly leftist, anti-status quo agenda. In countering the concern, he begins with basics. "There are certain things no one will fight you on," he says. "Good health, citizenship in a democratic society, news and information skills. That's just common sense."

BARBARA OSBORN

Video as a Second Language

MULTILINGUAL PROGRAM

Portland, Maine

Over the years Portland, Maine, has become a dedicated refugee relocation site, a place where U.S. immigration officials can send recent arriv-

als knowing that the city offers programs, services, and a mileu that can help buffer the difficulties of resettlement. In this context, a media artist known as Huey (James Coleman officially) has developed a media education program that dovetails with the English as a Second Language (ESL) classes that are so essential in the area's schools.

Unlike cities such as Los Angeles, where fluency in two or three languages would enable teachers to cope perfectly well, "Our students speak about 27 languages," says Huey. "There are refugees from Cambodia, Vietnam, Afghanistan, and more recently, Somolia." In many cases translators are simply not available. Some students, especially those from war-torn areas, arrive at school illiterate even in their own language.

Huey's approach to media education emphasizes a hands-on approach, rather than media analysis, partly because of the language barriers. He prepares the ground by showing students works by other kids. "The first time I did that I saw the light dawn in the kids' heads; I heard them say, 'Hey, I can do this!,'" says Huey, who works as a consultant with ESL teachers in three Portland schools. In addition, he is an artist-in-residence at five other schools in Maine and New Hampshire and is director of the Maine Student Film and Video Festival. "They recognize that even if they can't speak English well, they can make a videotape. Teachers pick up on the excitement, even if they're freaked by the technology."

Huey has been teaching students to make videos since 1989 under the auspices of the Multilingual Program in the Portland Public School System, which received two Title VII Grants from the U.S. Department of Education. These grants provide for three essential components for success: teacher training, equipment, and a media artist consultant.

All the teachers first take a workshop with Huey: K-8 teachers take an intensive, week-long animation workshop, while high school teachers take a video production workshop, which includes live action and some animation.

In the younger grades, the ESL teacher's role is to work with the students to come up with a story for the videotape and to write the narration. Huey works with the students to make and animate the images. The school's music teacher also gets involved. In making the video *Jungle Rescue*, for instance, the idea came from 4th and 5th grade students at Reiche Elementary School, who had just finished a unit on animals and endangered species. The students came up with the story concept: Bad people were going to take away the animals for a circus, but some kids found out with the help of a computer. They needed a character called Spy to help them capture the bad guys and save the animals. Four or five students hammered out the storyboard with Huey's help; then all the students drew the animals, characters, and backgrounds. While the music teacher worked with the kids on the score, Huey worked with them on the dialogue and animal sounds. The students animated the pictures frame by frame and took turns narrating the story.

When Huey works with high school students, he has them concentrate on making documentaries about their own cultures. This requires them to go into their respective communities and conduct interviews with relatives and others. They also have to do more editing, which challenges their abilities to listen to and understand English. Through these media projects, they strengthen their language skills, document their backgrounds, and allow other students to learn about their cultures. Since the tapes are shown on local cable channels, the students get to reach a wide audience and involve a larger segment of their community.

"The key to working successfully with the teachers," Huey explains, "is to make them realize that doing media arts is creative and fun, and that their students are going to learn a lot through the process." After collaborating with Huey for four years, the teachers are beginning to see the value of media arts education. Recently four of the 10 teachers he works with have asked him to teach them how to edit, so they can incorporate media



Courtesy Indian Island School, Penobscot Nation, Maine

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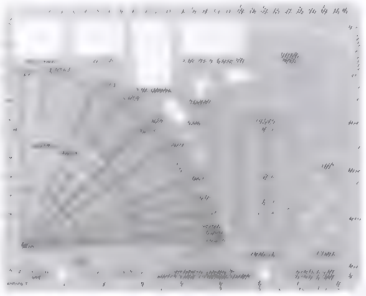
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activities into more of their classes.

These teachers have seen that media training offers their students a creative way to improve their English, their public speaking, and their communications skills in general. They see that video appeals to all kinds of students, because they all watch television. The program gives students their first taste of job skills and career possibilities: as technicians, directors, writers, musicians, actors, artists. And it breaks down the walls between schools and their communities through cable TV and closed circuit screenings and student research within the community. Some teachers agree with Huey that video can be a catalyst for change in education.

ROBIN WHITE

Robin White was project coordinator for the National Alliance of Media Education.

Critiquing Channel One

BILLERICA MIDDLE SCHOOLS

Billerica, Massachusetts

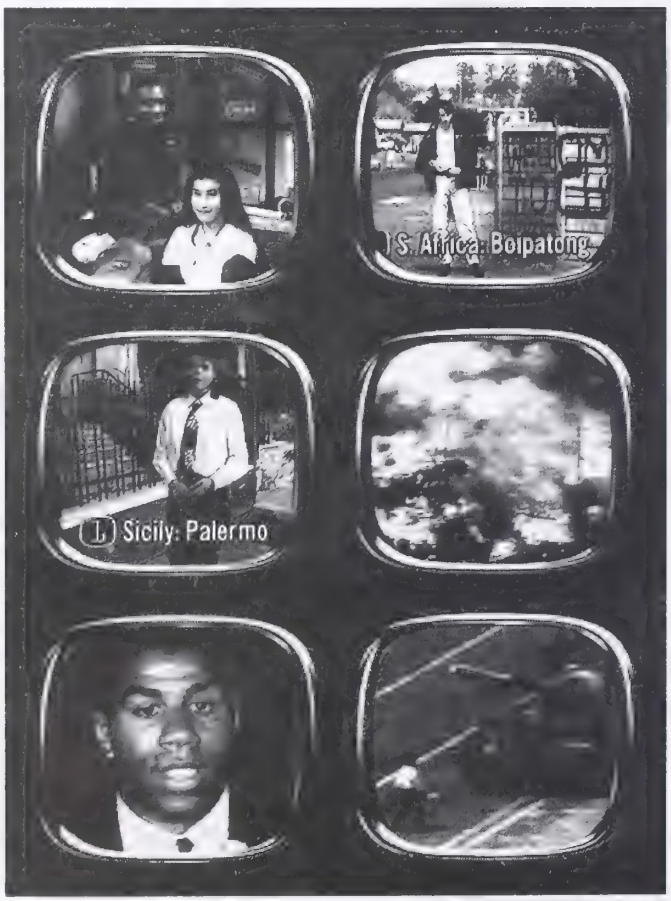
In 1989, Billerica Memorial High School was the site for one of Whittle Communications' first Channel One schools. Last summer, the town's middle school teachers voted to bring Channel One into grades 6-8. But before school administrators would okay the teachers' decision, they wanted to be sure Channel One would be presented in an educational context that would allow students to take charge of TV.

Two more unlikely allies—Channel One and media literacy—would be hard to imagine, but according to Billerica's assistant superintendent Dr. John Katsoulis, "Channel One provided the equipment and intensified our community's interest in TV as a resource rather than an uncontrolled force in society."

Whittle's precedent-setting pact offered schools throughout the country use of a satellite dish, a VCR, and monitors in every classroom in exchange for the school's commitment to play Whittle's 10 minutes of news and two minutes of commercials each day. For schools with measly budgets and little video equipment, the pact with the devil called Advertising was very tempting. Critics decried the penetration of advertising into the schools, but teachers and administrators found the price worth paying. Whittle is currently in just under 12,000 or approximately 40 percent of all secondary schools.

Katsoulis hired Dr. Renee Hobbs, a media literacy specialist and associate professor of Communications at Babson College, to work on the problem of introducing Channel One into the classroom without accepting it uncritically. This past January, Hobbs began the first in-service training course for one-fourth of all Billerica middle school teachers. In March, Channel One started piping its 12-minute daily program into the town's two middle schools, and the teachers began instructing their classes in how to deconstruct news and advertisements. In fact, Hobbs notes, the teaching design has expanded beyond Channel One to include programming appropriate for all grade levels and subject areas.

Hobbs says the availability of Channel One as a point of common reference for all the teachers was wonderful, since it facilitated discussion among them about material they all had seen. The Channel One programming proved useful in another way as well. "The average age of teachers is 42," she says. "Most teachers aren't watching a lot



Courtesy Whittle Educational Network

of TV, and they're not watching MTV, *Fresh Prince*, and *Married with Children*." Channel One has made teachers aware of the characteristics of other programming targeted at their students and further convinced them of the need for media literacy.

Curiously, Billerica's media education program has Whittle's blessing. Jim Ritts, Whittle president of network affairs, attended Hobbs' initial presentation to Billerica administrators and teachers. Hobbs assumed he was there to check up on her, but after the presentation Ritts told her he thought she was doing something very important. "I was enormously impressed by what she had to say and its potential positive outcome," he says. Whittle wants to "spread some of the positives" and will fund 10 scholarships for Channel One teachers to attend Hobbs' Institute on Media Education this August at Harvard.

Despite Channel One's support for the program, the nature of the company's agreement with schools doesn't make media analysis of its broadcasts easy. The 12 minutes of programming is recorded by a school's VCR during the wee hours of the night. The following day, school administrators play it back from a centralized location to home rooms throughout the school building. Any analysis during home room has to be done during the centralized playback, and Hobbs admits that this is an "inhibiting factor."

Teachers get around it, she says, by focusing student attention on either the ads or the news, analyzing one while the other is playing or immediately following the program. Other teachers use a less frenetic strategy, borrowing the cassette and showing the broadcast a second time during class periods.

Eventually teachers tend to move away from Channel One for media analysis, Hobbs notes, because the quality of the programming is uneven. As they get more sophisticated, she says, teachers prefer to use richer, more interesting texts.

Hobbs believes that Billerica's "district-centered" training—which provides skills to a community of teachers—is a more effective route into the schools than the popular shotgun approach of offering one or two-day seminars attended by a handful of teachers from different districts. "One teacher in a school can't make media literacy work," she says. "When that teacher's energy flags, the program disappears." Billerica's training program is beginning to serve as a model for neighboring schools, which pleases Katsoulis. "Nationally," he says, "people have to get their heads out of the sand and start giving kids skills to deal with television."

BARBARA OSBORN

Barbara Osborn develops media literacy materials for the Center for Media and Values and is a contributing editor to The Independent.

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JASON LOWI

In 1992, performance artists Coco Fusco and Guillermo Gomez-Peña set out to create a parody of the ethnographic displays of indigenous peoples once popular in Europe and North America. Presenting themselves as "undiscovered Amerindians," the pair posed in a golden cage in public plazas and natural history museums in Madrid, London, Sydney, Washington, DC, Chicago, Minneapolis, and New York. In **Two Amerindians Visit the West** (30 min., video), Fusco and Gomez-Peña combine documentation of audience response —some onlookers took them for authentic "savages"—with archival materials on past ethnographic displays to reflect on the West's perennial penchant for the "primitive." *Two Amerindians Visit the West*: Coco Fusco/ Paula Heredia, 672 Fulton St., Brooklyn, NY 11217; (718) 624-2557 (Fusco)/ (212) 953-3564 (Heredia).

Rondo Avenue was the heart of St. Paul's African American community in Minnesota; Lowry Hill once boasted many of Minneapolis' most lavish homes. But a freeway tore through the two communities, altering the character of each forever. Cristine Craton and Timothy Schwab's **Ghosts Along the Freeway** (10 min.,16mm) explores the impact of the interstate freeway on both neighborhoods and the vaster themes of change, destruction, and migration. *Ghosts Along the Freeway*: Unity Productions, 7400 SW 70th St., Aberdeen, SD 57401; (605) 225-2559.

Punks, hippies, skinheads, slackers, grungers, and pseudo-pedants provide the backdrop for **Tales of Beatnik Glory** (35mm; incorporating 16mm, S-8, and video). The new film, currently in production from AIVF member Phil Hartman, writer/director of *No Picnic*, is based on the Lower East Side stories of Ed Sanders. *Tales of Beatnick Glory* follows Oblivia and "On the Road" Mulligan—a girl without a past and a man who can't escape it—as they wander through a strange world of underground icons, talking tattoos, and a magical basement wall. *Tales of Beatnick Glory*: Pandemonium Productions, 278 E. 10th St., Ste 5B, New York, NY 10009; (212) 674-7031.

The Lower East Side is also the locale for Jeffrey Arsenault's first feature, **Night Owl** (77 min., 16mm b&w). Shot in 12 days over the course of two-and-a-half years, the film traces a young man's desperate search for his sister and the discovery of something he never expected. *Night Owl*: Franco Productions, 66 Madison Ave., #2-I, New York, NY 10016; (212) 779-2493.

"I told him, 'Just let me pack my things. I'm gonna leave, and I won't come back.' He said, 'Bitch, before you leave, I'll kill you,'" says Shannon Booker in the documentary **Defending Our Lives**. The magnitude and severity of domestic violence in the United States is the focus of *Defending Our Lives* (40 min., video) by Margaret Lazarus, Renner Wunderlich, and Stacey Kabat. The documentary touches upon the themes of injustice, survival, and the irony that prison is often the cost of self-defense. The result of a collaboration between Cambridge Documentary Films and Battered Women Fighting Back!—a prison support group for battered women who killed their abusers in self-defense. *Defending Our Lives* is out of production. *Defending Our Lives*: Cambridge Documentary Films, Box 385, Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 354-3677.



Presenting themselves as "undiscovered Amerindians," performance artists Coco Fusco and Guillermo Gomez-Peña travelled around Europe, Australia, and the U.S. in a golden cage and captured viewers' reactions in the 30-minute video, *Two Amerindians Visit the West*.

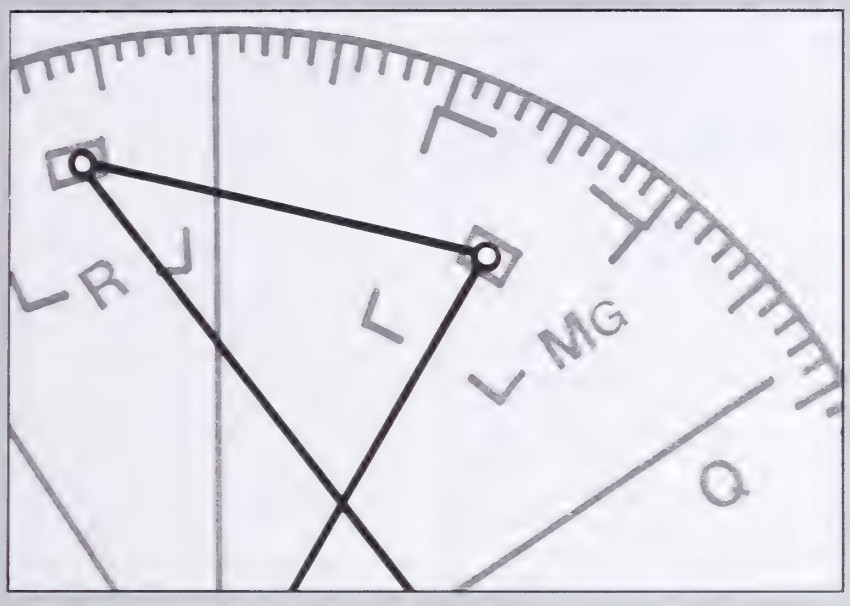
Photo: Encarnación Teruel, courtesy videomakers

East Wind-West Wind: Pearl Buck, the Woman Who Embraced the World (90 min., 16mm) documents the life of Nobel Prize-winning author and social activist Pearl S. Buck, from her birth in 1892 in West Virginia as a missionary child to her youth in rural China and her compelling adult years. The film blends oral history, historical footage, home movies, and interviews with close family members and friends in a portrait of the women and the issues that shaped the life of the only American woman writer ever to win the Nobel Prize. *East Wind-West Wind*: Refocus Films, Box 3118, Westport, CT 06880; (203) 226-5289.

112th & Central: Through the Eyes of Children (108 mins., 16mm, color) represents the collaboration of film industry professionals—including Jim Chambers, Hal Hisey, and Vondie Curtis—with a host of inner-city youth from South Central Los Angeles. Largely conceived and directed by the students, the film focuses on the aftermath of the L.A. riots: the state of the community, the issues, and the hope that remains. Filmed on location in South L.A., *112th & Central* , now out of production, incorporates interviews with LAPD Police Chief Willie Williams, community children, gang members, and both resident and community leaders. *112th & Central*: Weissman/Angelotti Productions, 3855 Lankershim Blvd., North Hollywood, CA 91614; (818) 763-2975.

When a student newspaper at a large midwestern university prints a neo-Nazi editorial proclaiming the Holocaust a sham, the paper's editor is visited by a Holocaust survivor who provides her with a graphic history lesson. Columbus, Ohio-based member Sheldon Gleisser has completed shooting **Survivor's Guilt** (15 min., 16mm), a short film that addresses historical revisionists' denial of the Holocaust. *Survivor's Guilt*: UpFront Films, Box 07578, Columbus, OH 43207.

Behind the war in the former Yugoslavia are the unofficial representatives in the conflict: local agricultural workers, students, intellectual dissidents, local officials, and Bosnian refugees of Serbian camps. AIVF member Nick Ceh along with Jeff Harder and Jim Stauskaskus traveled to Bosnia to document the views of these and others on the current conflict, ethnic tension, and the process of "democratization" in Croatia and Bosnia (28 min., Hi8). Currently in postproduction, and as yet unnamed, the film is slated for completion in late summer. Nick Ceh, 1335 West Thorndale, Chicago, IL 60660; (312) 274-3000 (Ceh); (312) 321-0880 (Stauskaskus).

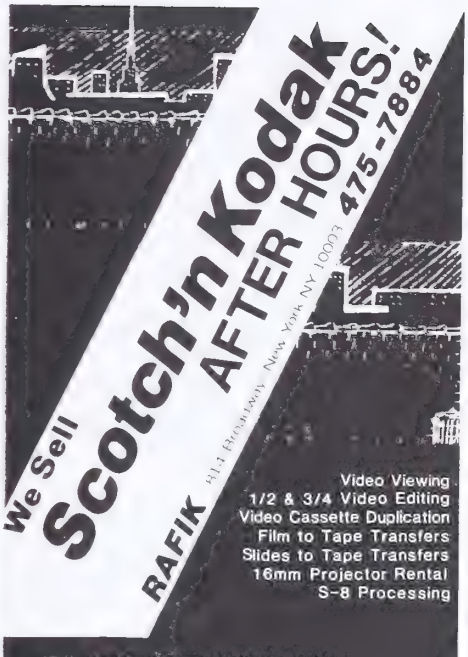


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This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser, director of the FIVF Festival Bureau. Listings do not constitute an endorsement. Since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. In order to improve our reliability and make this column more beneficial to independents, we encourage all film- and videomakers to contact FIVF Festival Bureau with their personal festival experiences, positive and negative.

Domestic

AMERICAN INDIAN FILM FESTIVAL AND VIDEO EXPOSITION, Nov. 11-15, CA. Now entering 18th yr, oldest int'l competitive fest of films & videos by or about Native Americans in US accepts works produced in previous 2 yrs. Sponsored by American Indian Film Institute, founded in 1979 to address negative stereotyping & recognize positive portrayals of Native Americans, fest provides showcase for films that might not receive recognition in theatrical or nontheatrical release. Cats: doc feature, doc short, commercial feature, docudrama, live short subject, animated short subject & industrial. Awards: American Indian Motion Picture Awards, to be presented on Nov. 13 at Palace of Fine Arts. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Entry fee: $50. Deadline: Sept. 7. Contact: Michael Smith, director, American Indian Film Festival & Video Exposition, American Indian Film Institute, 333 Valencia St., Ste 322, San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 554-0525; fax: (415) 554-0542.

ASBURY FILM FESTIVAL, Oct. 8-10; Dec. 3-5, NY. Noncompetitive fest for ind. short films under 25 min. Special theme this yr: Academy Award winning shorts from the past. All genres accepted. Held at NYC's Fashion Institute of Technology, combines screenings w/ live entertainment. Over 1,000 people attend annually. Entry fee: $40. Format: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Aug. 30. Contact: Doug LeClaire, fest director, Asbury Film Festival, 207 E. 37th St., Ste 5D, New York, NY 10016; (212) 687-1988.

ASIAN AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, March, CA. Now in 12th yr, fest is largest film & video showcase in world dedicated to presenting works by Asian Pacific American makers, w/ over 75 films & videos from new & estab. makers shown in last yr's edition. This yr's fest will incl. retros, panels, presentations, audience awards, guest-curated programs & midnight movies. Fest is seeking new film & video works by &/or about Asian Pacific & Asian Pacific American people, cultures & experiences. Works in all genres accepted, incl. features, shorts, doc, narrative, experimental & animation. Sponsored by National Asian American Telecommunications Association, which supports Asian Pacific American artists working in film, video & radio through local film fests & screenings, nat'l public TV broadcasts, distribution to educational institutions, technical assistance, grants & fiscal sponsorships to media artists. No entry fee. Deadline: Oct. 15. Contact: Pau Mayeda Berges, fest director, NAATA, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 863-0814; fax: 7428.

CENTRAL FLORIDA FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Sept. 18-19, FL. 11th annual competitive showcase for ind. & no-budget films. Cats: narrative, doc, animation, computer animation, experimental. Screenings held at Orlando Museum of Art. Entry fee: $20. Formats: 16mm, super 8, 8mm, Hi8, 1/2". Deadline: Aug. 21. Contact: Jason Neff, Association of Cinematic & Video Arts, 15 1/2 N. Eola Dr., #5, Orlando, FL 32801; (407) 839-6045.

NEW YORK EMMY AWARDS, March, NY. 1994 will mark 37th yr of annual TV awards for outstanding achievements in programming & individual crafts. Programming must have had its initial broadcast or cablecast in NY State or northern NJ between Sept. 1, 1992 & Aug. 31, 1993 (programming that was avail. to more than 50% of nat'l viewing audience during that time ineligible). NATAS is seeking out ind. programming: individuals can enter w/out company or station affiliation; awards go not only to producers but also to other skill areas; non-English programming is eligible in original language format. Entries must incl. 2/3 original content. Over 40 entry cats, such as multi-part news feature, investigative journalism, issues programming, programming for young people, fine arts/cultural/performance/historical programming, event coverage, sports programming, off-camera achievement, editing, computer animation & graphics. Format: 3/4". Entry fees: $50 Academy Member's 1st entry ($85 membership fee); $150 all other entries; $50 additional names after 1st four. Deadline: Aug. 2. Contact: David B. Williams, Administrator, New York Emmy Awards, NY Chapter of National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences, 1560 Broadway, New York, NY 10036; (212) 768-7050.

WOMEN IN THE DIRECTORS CHAIR FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, March, IL. Now in 13th yr, showcase for works by women directors from many cultures continues "to provide arena for lives & visions of women so often rendered invisible or ignored; women who build understanding through creating alternative images & necessary stories; women who raise important questions concerning mainstream media's representations of the world." Only fest of womens' work in Midwest, WIDC receives nearly 300 entries yearly & screens about 70. Program incl. Chicago & US premieres & "gives local artists public forum to meet ind. media-makers & discuss issues of importance to women, artists & world." WIDC is nonprofit, media arts organization based in Chicago dedicated to giving women filmmakers support & encouragement to pursue ind. work. Cats: narrative, doc, computer graphics, experimental & animation. Formats: 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Entry fee: $15/WIDC members; $25/nonmembers. Deadline: Oct. 1. Contact: Women in Director Chair Film & Video Festival, 3435 N. Sheffield Ave., #3, Chicago, IL 60657; (312) 281-4988.

Foreign

AMIENS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL AND MARKET, Nov., France. Now in 13th yr, competitive fest began in 1970s as Amiens Film Days Against Racism & For Friendship Among Peoples. Today it continues to focus on films exploring cultural identity, minority groups & ethnic issues, w/ particular emphasis on little known cinemas & multicultural film prod. throughout world. Feature-length, short fiction or doc films that address identity of people or ethnic minority, racism or issues of representation & differences eligible. In past yrs, fest has presented retros, panoramas & tributes to cinema of Africa, Caribbean, Latin America, Native America, African America & Asia. Audiences of over 30,000 view about 20 films in competition. Awards: grand prize, special jury prize, acting awards. Fest incl. market & screens over 150 ind. & multicultural films. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on cassette. No entry fee. Deadline: Sept. 17. Contact: Jean-Pierre Garcia, Festival Int'l du Film d'Amiens, Association pour les Journees Cinematographiques d'Amiens, 36 rue de Noyan, 8000 Amiens, France; tel: 22 91 01 44; fax: 22 92 51 82.

BRUSSELS INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF SUPER 8 AND VIDEO, Nov. 9-14, Belgium. Int'l competition, now in 20th yr, open to films & videos w/ "creative & noncommercial character." Program also incl. special information sections & various exhibitions. Special theme sections are part of int'l & nat'l competitions, incl. Video Dance (video on contemporary dance) & Short Film Festival (works under 1 min.). Entries must be produced after Jan. 1, 1991. No entry fee. Formats: 16mm, super 8, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Oct. 4. Contact: Festival Int'l du Film Super 8 et Video, 12 rue P.E. Janson, 1050 Bruxelles, Belgium; tel/fax: 32 2 649 3340.

CLERMONT-FERRAND INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 4-12, France. This fest, devoted to short films of all genres, offers int'l competition (w/ 48 countries represented in 1993), nat'l competition & additional special program. Altogether over 230 mainly fiction but also animation, doc & experimental short films are offered to large & enthusiastic public, which totalled over 75,000 in 1993. Jury & public prizes reward best in various cats. Fest is among largest in France. Open access market provides meeting place for producers, directors & TV buyers & short film programmers; about 1,000 professionals check out offering of over 1,500 titles. Fest entries must be less than 40 min. & completed after Jan. 1, 1992. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Nov. 2. Contact: Roger Gonin, Festival du Court Metrage de Clermont-Ferrand, 26, rue des Jacobins, 63000 Clermont-Ferrand, France; tel: 33 73 91 65 73; fax: 33 73 92 11 93.

GOLDEN KNIGHT INTERNATIONAL AMATEUR FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov. 24-27, Malta. Organized by Malta Amateur Cine Circle, fest is open to all nonprofessional prods on film or video. Fest divided into 3 classes: amateur prods by individuals, groups or clubs made for pleasure w/ no commercial purpose (Class A); prods made by film school students (Class B); others (Class C). Entries should be less than 30 min. Formats: 16mm, super 8, 1/2". Awards-Class A: Golden, Silver & Bronze Knights plus Certificates of Merit for 1st, 2nd & 3rd place; trophy & Certificate for best doc; trophy & Certificate for best animation; Class B: Golden, Silver & Bronze Knights plus Certificates of Merit; Class C: Golden Knight & Certificate of Merit. Entry fees: $15 (Class A); $30 (Class B); $60 (Class C); incl. return postage w/ fee. Contact: Malta Amateur Cine Circle, P.O. Box 450, Valletta, CMR 01, Malta; tel: 356 222345; fax: 356 225047.

MANNHEIM INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Nov., Germany. At 42, Mannheim is one of Germany's oldest film fests. Incl. competition of new ind. dramatic & doc feature films & short films from all over world, incl. Eastern Europe, US, Latin America, Asia & Africa. Fest features single, concentrated competition program. Twenty films shown in 4-5 programs daily. Cinema-Symposium "SchauPlatz" is pointed debate & discussion between directors; also incl. 1 theme day. Awards: Grand Prize for best full-length feature film (DM25,000 & inclusion in fest's "Winner's Archive"); Josef von Sternberg Prize for most individual film in narrative structure (DM 5,000); Doc Prize of South German Broadcasting Company (DM10,000 in connection w/ offer for broadcast rights); FIPRESCI Prize; INTER-FILM Prize; Jury of Catholic Film Work; Adult Education Organization Bade-Wurttemberg; environmental organization Krempelmarkt Mannheim & others. Ind. int'l jury awards prizes. Films shown publicly in German cinemas or screened on German TV prior to fest or that have participated in official program of another European film fest ineligible. Entries must have been completed w/in previous 12 mos. Entrants pay shipping costs. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. No entry fee. Deadline: Sept. 3. Contact: Dr. Michael Koetz, Internationales Film Festival Mannheim, Collini-Center-Galerie, D-6800 Mannheim 1, Germany; tel: 49 621 102943; fax: 49 621 291564.

RAINDANCE FILM FESTIVAL AND MARKET, Oct. 15-22, UK. 1st British event exclusively dedicated to promotion of US & int'l independently produced films. Special sections in fest will highlight New Ind. Cinema from N. America, as well as New Releases from British Cinema, Focus on World Cinema & sidebar on experimental Pixelvision films. Cash prizes awarded in cats of ind. feature, best short, best music film/video, best doc. Market runs concurrently w/ fest & accepts features, docs & works-in-progress (for special market section *The Directors Reel*). Features, docs & shorts accepted. Entry fees: $75 (fest); $250 (market). Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadlines: Aug. 15 (fest); Sept. 15 (market). Send SASE to US contact: Jamie Ader-Brown/ Suzanne Fedak, In Pictures, Tribeca Film Center, Ste. 711, 375 Greenwich St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 941-4020; fax: 4021.

ROTTERDAM FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 26-Feb. 6, The Netherlands. Second only to Cannes, Venice & Berlin in attendance, budget & screened films, Rotterdam maintains intimate, noncompetitive atmosphere so that non-commercial films can get attention. Fest features daily screenings & Cine-Mart, a market which brings filmmakers into contact w/ int'l distributors, producers & programmers to help finance features-in-progress. Some directors given transportation; accommodations regularly provided. Fest director Emile Fallaux, who selects program emphasizing features, will be in NYC & LA in September for pre-selection. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 1/2" NTSC. Final deadline: Dec 1; however works are reviewed & selections made beginning in September. US contact: Bill Oliver, 265 Lafayette St., #A3, New York, NY 10012; (212) 274-8939.

TOKYO VIDEO FESTIVAL, Nov., Japan. 16th annual competitive fest for video works of all themes & styles "from home video movies expressing the joy of family life to art & experimental video." Awards: Video Grand Prix ($4,000 plus 10 day round trip to Japan for 2, trophy & citation); JVC President Award ($4,000 plus 10 day round trip to Japan for 2, trophy & citation); 5 Works of

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Excellence ($2,000, $2,000 equiv. in JVC video equipment, trophy & citation); 10 Works of Special Distinction ($1,000 & citation); 15 Special Merit Awards ($800 & citation) & Special Awards ($1,500 each). Entries must be under 20 min. Formats: 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Sept. 10. Contact: Tokyo Video Festival, c/o JVC Company of America, 41 Slater Dr., Elmwood Pk, NJ 07407.

VALLADOLID INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Oct., Spain. Considered "most serious & best organized film event in Spain," competitive fest of fests celebrates 38th edition in 1993. Stated objective is "to show & promote films of artistic quality that contribute to knowledge & dialogue between human beings." Sections: Official (panorama of current int'l cinema: feature-length & short films in section may participate in competition or remain out of competition); Meeting Point (noncompetitive section incl. films from past & present worthy of special attention); Tributes (devoted to preirectors, genres, styles, schools, nat'l cinema, etc.) & Time of History (docs that treat moments or epochs in history from privileged viewpoint of cinema). Films entered in Official & Time of History sections must be recent prods w/ no previous commercial or TV/video screening in Spain; unscreened at any other film fest in Spain, in or out of competition. Awards: Golden Spike & Silver Spike to 2 best feature-length films; addition Ptas. 2,000,000 (approx. US$20,000) to Spanish distributor of Golden Spike winner; Best 1st Film in competition (up to & incl. director's 3rd feature-length film eligible for $10,000 award); Best Actor/Actress Awards; Best Dir of Photography Award; Golden Spike ($5,000) & Silver Spike to 2 best short films; Special Jury Prize to short & feature-length films. Ind. jury awards $5,000 prize to best doc in Time of History section & 2 Special Mentions. Formats: 35mm (16mm, 3/4" & 1/2" accepted in Time of History section only). No entry fee. Deadline: early Sept. Contact: Fernando Lara, Semana Internacional de Cine de Valladolid, Teatro Calderon, c/ Angustias, 1-1, Box 646, 47080 Valladolid, Spain; tel: 34 83 30 57 00; fax: 34 83 30 98 35.

VENDOME INTERNATIONAL RAILWAY FESTIVAL, Oct. 15-16, France. 3rd fest featuring films & videos that focus on trains, stations, their history, their atmosphere & people who work w/ them. Shorts, fiction, doc & works commissioned by railways accepted. In 1992, fest showed 70 films/videos from 16 countries, w/ audiences of 1,500. Awards: Grand Prix, Town of Vendôme prize, category prizes (shorts, doc, company image & familiarization, marketing/sales promotion, advertising, information & training), Public Prize, Special Youth Prize. No entry fee. Deadline: Sept. 4. Contact Comite d'Organisation du Festival du Film Ferroviaire de Vendome, Maire de Vendome, Parc Ronsard, F41106 Vendome Cedex, France; tel: 33 54 77 29 35; fax: 33 54 80 21 64.

Attn AIVF Members:

If you live in NYC, you will be receiving a survey from Richard Brick from the Mayor's Office of Film & TV. This survey will help determine the financial strength, size, and needs of the film/video community in NYC. Please take the time to fill this out. It will help AIVF and other media advocates lobby for policies and priorities that will help us all.

Buy ▪ Rent ▪ Sell

OFFICE SPACE AVAIL: Prime location in Noho building housing nonprofit film, publishing & environmental groups (and AIVF!). 2000 sq. ft. @ Bdwy & Houston. Can be subdivided. Ideal for share or production offices. Rent negotiable. Call John: (212) 473-3400.

NEW EQUIPMENT. Pricing on Lowel-Light, AKG, A-T, Bogen, Fostex Systems, Sennheiser, Sony, TCD 5PRODOII. Call J. Carpenter (CINE): (814) 333-8672.

BEAULIEU R16B (PZ) for sale. Professionally rated as in excellent condition. Angenieux 12-120 lens, crystal-sync motor, curved cable release, digital exposure meter, battery & charger, shoulder strap, aluminum case. $1,500. Call David Iverson (919) 834-6044.

16MM CAMERAS w/ 17-69 zoom for sale: brand new, Russian made, Springwound, Reflex, 8-48 fps & single shot w/ case, close-up diopter, filters & accessories. $250, incl. shipping. Reel Trading Co., 149 Main St., East Hartford, CT 06118; (203) 568-0592. Ltd. supply.

FILMMAKERS ON FILM: Videos for sale. Famous "Reel" filmmakers speak about their crafts, struggles, successes. Reel Women Videos: (516) 621-5592.

ROSCO MODEL 1500 FOG & SMOKE MACHINE for rent. $55/day. Special weekly & monthly rates avail. Call Ralph (718) 284-0223.

EXPERT IN CAMERA & LENS REPAIR: Work on Arriflex, Cinema Products, Eclair, Aaton. Call Ralph (718) 284-0223.

CINEMONTA 6-PLATE 16MM FLATBED, high-speed rewind, Crown Optics, excellent condition, $1,900. Nagra IVL, crystal, accessories $3,300. VA/DC area (703) 592-3701.

SAMPLE FILM INDUSTRY AGREEMENTS: 100+ attorney-prepared sample contracts relating to acquisition, development, packaging, financing, prod. & distribution; hard copy or diskette. For price list, call (310) 477-6842.

Distribution

SEEKING NEW WORKS for business market. Video Publishing House distribs videos in areas of leadership, motivation, quality mgmt, customer service, team concepts, globalization, etc. Julie Pfeiffer, Video Publishing House, 930 N. Nat'l Pkwy, Schaumburg, IL 60173; (800) 824-8889.

GUIDANCE ASSOCIATES/CENTER FOR HUMANITIES, publishing leaders in educational film & video for over 30 yrs, seeks new products for upcoming catalogs. Contact: Will Goodman or Sally Paris, 90 South Bedford Rd., Mt. Kisco, NY 10549; (800) 431-1242.

NEW DAY FILMS, coop. of ind. media producers w/ common vision, seeks new members w/ social issue docs for distrib. to nontheatrical US markets. Also consider distributing exceptional films & videos by nonmembers. Contact: New Day Films, 121 W. 27th St., Ste. 902, New York, NY 10001; (212) 645-8548.

SEEKING NEW WORKS for educational & health care markets. Fanlight Productions distributes films/videos in areas of health, sociology, psychology, etc. Karen McMillen, Fanlight Prods, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130; (800) 937-4113.

Each entry in the Classifieds column has a 250-character limit & costs $25 per issue. Ads exceeding this length will be edited. Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified must be typed, double-spaced & worded exactly as it should appear. Deadlines are the 8th of each month, two months prior to the cover date (e.g. Aug. 8 for the October issue). Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012.

CS ASSOCIATES, w/ over 20 yrs experience, represents inds. in foreign & domestic TV & video markets. We seek new programs of all types. Send preview cassette to 102 E. Blithedale Ave., Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-6060.

ATA TRADING CORP, actively & successfully distributing for ind. filmmakers for over 50 yrs, seeks new features, shorts, docs, children's, music, etc., to present to the world. Contact us at (212) 594-6460.

CINNAMON PRODUCTIONS, 23 yrs distributing ind. prods. to educ., home video & TV in N. & S. America, seeks new films/videos on social/minority concerns: environment, AIDS, Native Americans, drugs. 19 Wild Rose Rd., Westport, CT 06880; (203) 221-0613.

SEEKING NEW WORKS for educational mkts. Educational Productions distributes videos on early childhood education, special ed. & parent ed. Contact: Linda Freedman, Educational Prods, 7412 SW Beaverton Hillsdale Hwy, Portland, OR 97225; (800) 950-4949.

ALTERNATIVE FILMWORKS, experimental film distrib., seeks ind. film/video works, any length. No mainstream films. Send videotape copy to: alternative filmworks, Dept. IC, 259 Oakwood Ave., State College, PA 16803-1698; (814) 867-1528; fax: 9488.

CHIP TAYLOR COMMUNICATIONS, the best distributor, is always seeking the best prods. Send yours on VHS & we'll notify you w/in 7 days. Contact: CTC, 15 Spollett Dr., Derry, NH 03038.

Freelancers

GROW YOUR BUSINESS: Business Strategy Seminar offers 10-wk strategy & support groups for entrepreneurs. Small-business owners challenge you to focus your energy & expand your horizons. Immediate results. For info, call Katherine Crowley (212) 481-7075.

EXPERIENCED SENIOR SCRIPT CONSULTANT can doctor any script, market-ready for Hollywood. Also can edit, supervise, fix problem video programs. Producer/writer/editor for features, network & cable & published book author on films. (617) 354-7055.

ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY, frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" columns in *The Independent* & other magazines, offers legal services to film & video community on projects from development thru distribution. Reasonable rates. Contact Robert L. Seigel, Esq. (212) 545-9085.

SONY BVW 400 Betacam location crews &/or equipment rentals. Complete location pkg. incl. Chroziel Matt box, Sachtler 20 tripod monitor, complete sound kit, extensive lighting & grip pkg. Call for complete description by mail/fax. (212) 226-7686.

PRODUCTION MANAGER: NY street-smart organizer. Locations, crew & equipment. Parks, piers & street permits. Format incl. PAL for Europe. 15 yrs experience. Low-budget music video, docs or features handled professionally. Martin Kelsohn (212) 989-5704.

AWARD-WINNING CAMERAMAN w/ 16mm Aaton, Betacam SP & Steadicam, looking for challenging projects. Partial client list: ABC Sports, Atlantic Records, IBM, Pitney Bowes, Wilderness Society. Complete crews avail. Reasonable rates. Call Mike Carmine at (718) 224-3355.

TOP CREDIT DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY, West Coast: operator on major motion pictures/DP on lower budgets seeks hip projects. Self-owned 16mm & Betacam SP prod pkgs; 35mm avail. Award winner, visionary. Reasonable. Call John (213) 656-3550.

16MM PRODUCTION PACKAGE w/ detail-oriented cameraman from $150/day. Incl. CP-16 camera, w/ fluid head, Nagra, Sennheiser mics, Lowel lights, dolly & track, grip kit w/ mini-van. Complete film editing also avail. Tom (201) 933-6698.

HI8 PRODUCTION PKG & crew avail. for short- & long-term projects. Camera has interchangeable lenses & digital effects. Great for docs, industrials, music videos, sports, performances, etc. Experienced crew. Call: (718) 788-5502.

BOOMMUSIC, the music prod. company from prize-winning Dutch composer/producer Bob van der Boom, is new in NY. Known for his tasteful quality music & expertise. Has facilities. Call for big & small projects. (212) 663-0052.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Experienced cameraman avail. for ind. projects. 35mm & 16mm pkgs. Contact: David Temple (212) 924-7870.

AWARD-WINNING GERMAN CINEMATOGRAPHER, Wolfgang Held, owner of 16mm Aaton package w/ Zeiss Superspeeds, looking for films to shoot. Will travel. Call: (212) 620-0029.

TOTAL SUPER 8 SOUND film services. All S-8 prod., postprod, editing, sync sound, mix, multi-track, single & double-system sound editing, transfers, stripping, stills, etc. Send SASE for rate sheet or call Bill Creston, 727 6th Ave., New York, NY 10010; (212) 924-4893.

DIRECTORS: Composer w/ network advertising & Henson Prod. credits avail. for commercial/creative film/video projects; digital facility w/ video lock-up for prod. of acoustic/electronic music, FX, etc. Very versatile. (Project more important than budget.) Steve Raskin (212) 219-1620.

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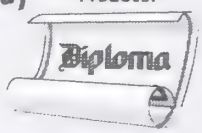
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DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ 35mm Arriflex BL, Zeiss Superspeeds, zoom, video tap, lighting/grip. Feature, commercial, music video, credits. Exp. shooting in Philippines, Mexico, both coasts. Call Blain for reel. NY: (212) 279-0162; LA: (213) 368-6464.

AWARD-WINNING DIRECTOR/CAMERAMAN (Addy, Clio, Emmy, Telly) avail. for features, shorts, docs. TVCs, own 35 & 16mm cameras. Time-lapse expert. Francis (216) 221-0050.

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SONY BVW-300A w/ or w/out award-winning cameraman. One-piece Beta/Beta SP unit: lightest, w/ best resolution & sensitivity avail. Vinten tripod, DP/Chimera light kit, monitor, mics, wide lens. Rate tailored to project. Call Scott (212) 721-3668.

BETACAM SP Sony 3-chip BVP/70/BVV5 SP comb. tripod, lights, mics. Incl. my services as cameraman/technician & use of 5-passenger van. Corporate, industrial, doc: $550/day. Sony 3/4" off-line editing system for rent w/ delivery & setup. Tom (212) 279-7003.

EXPERIENCED COMPOSER avail. to write/orchestrate music for film, video, doc. Versatile, insightful, works w/in deadline. Has own MIDI studio. NY & vicinity. Demo tape & resumé avail. Kahn-Ellis (215) 725-3816.

BETACAM SP LOCATION PKG w/ technician, $400/day. Incl. lights, mics & Sachler tripod. Same but non-SP Beta, 3/4" or Hi8, $300. Window dubs, Betacam, Hi8, VHS & 3/4" also avail. Electronic Visions, (212) 691-0375.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY avail. for dramatic 16 or 35mm prods of any length. Credits incl. *Metropolitan*. Call to see my reel. John Thomas (201) 783-7360.

AD DESIGN/ADMIN. ASST. Typing w/ laser prints. Ideal for letters, mail list, invoices & proposals. Design for ads, letterhead & business cards. Fully equipped Mac design/admin. office. Quick. Reasonable. Call (212) 439-7264; fax: 662-5513.

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VIDEO EDITING & TV GRAPHICS. Hi8, 3/4", Betacam. Budget burn-ins, 8mm time coding, edit decks, etc. Let us design your title sequence & promo. You will profit from our 15+ yrs in broadcasting, ind. prods & hard work. Call Matt (212) 675-4188.

CINEMATOGRAPHER looking for interesting projects. Owner of an Arri 16SR & other camera & lighting equipment. Call Ralph (718) 284-0223.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ awards, talent & experience. Credits incl. features, commercials, industrials, docs, shorts & music videos. Owner of Aaton 16mm/super 16 & Betacam pkgs. Call for my reel. Bob (212) 255-8868.

Preproduction

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR looking for original script or story. All genres, mainly interested in contemporary drama & comedy. Please send material to: D. Benvenisti, 142 West End Ave., 20T, New York, NY 10023.

CREW FOR ROBERTO MONTICELLO'S feature film, *Even Tan*, sequel to 1989 award-winning *Kiki La Toilette*, dealing w/ activists, adventurers & difficulties w/ relationships. Union/non-union. Info to: Ms. Lisa Davis, Roberto Monticello Prods, Box 372, New York, NY10014.

SCRIPTS for 3-picture deal for European distribution (pay cable release in US). No gratuitous sex/violence. Also co-screenwriters for TV series on exploitation of human rights. Mail synopsis only to: Ms. Sheila Daniels, Roberto Monticello Prods, Box 372, New York, NY 10014.

THE SCREENPLAY DOCTOR & THE MOVIE MECHANIC: Professional story editors/postprod. specialists will analyze your screenplay or treatment & evaluate your film-in-progress. Major studio & ind. background. Reasonable rates. Call (212) 219-9224.

PRODUCTION COMPANY seeks scripts for features & documentaries. Call (201) 222-1971.

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COZY & CHEAP, Sony 3/4" off-line system for only $450/week. W. 57th St. location. Call Jane (212) 929-4795 or Deborah (212) 226-2579.

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16MM EDITING ROOM & OFFICE space for rent in suite of inds. Fully equipped w/ 6-plate Steenbeck & 24-hr access. All windowed & new carpet. Located at W. 24th St. & 7th Ave. Reasonable rates. Call Jeff at Film Partners (212) 366-5101.

FIVF THANKS

The Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF), the foundation affiliate of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, supports a variety of programs and services for the independent producer community, including publication of *The Independent*, maintenance of the Festival Bureau, seminars, and an information clearinghouse. None of this work would be possible without the generous support of the following individuals and businesses:

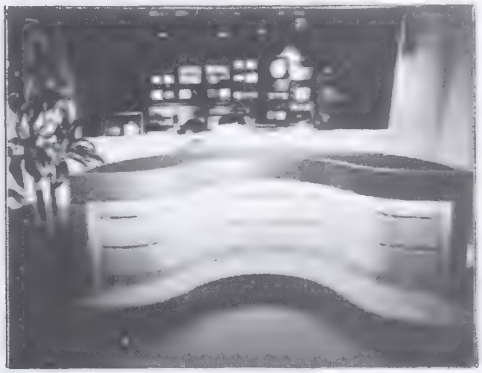
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NOTICES

Conferences ▪ Seminars

CALIFORNIA LAWYERS FOR THE ARTS offers a workshop on "Licensing Art & Design" on Aug. 17 in Los Angeles; "From Demo Tapes to Recording Contracts," Aug. 25 in Oakland; & "An Overview of Patent Law," Aug. 18 in San Francisco. All workshops cost $15. In L.A., call (310) 395-8893; Oakland (510) 444-6351; San Francisco (415) 775-7200.

COLLEGE ART ASSOCIATION's annual conference, Feb. 1994, seeks proposals/presentations on ind. video from lesbian & gay mediamakers, scholars, historians & critics. Panels will combine papers, presentations & excerpts from prods, mapping medium's diversity & various roles it has played in lesbian & gay self-representation. Possible themes incl.: how ind. video has (or has not) functioned as bridge between gender, race, ethnicity & class w/in community; ind. lesbian & gay video's distinct relationship w/ institutional art video & queer film; the future of lesbian & gay ind. prod. Submit outlines, proposals, etc., to: Jane Cottis/John Di Stefano, 328 Museum Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90065.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars covering a wide range of topics, from 16mm film & video prod. to fundraising, distribution, screenwriting, special effects & guest lectures. Technical workshops are small, hands-on; all are taught by professionals in the field. For info, contact: FAF, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA, 94103; (914) 552-8760.

FILM/VIDEO ARTS offers workshops:"Introduction to 3/4" Video Editing" on August 14 & 15 ($215 members, $240 nonmembers); "Advanced Topics in On-Line Video Editing," Aug. 21 & 22, 10 a.m.- 5 p.m. ($225 members, $250 nonmembers & "3-D Animation on the Amiga," 5 Thursdays beginning August 12, 6-10 p.m. ($250 members, $275 nonmembers). For more info, call (212) 673-9361.

INDEPENDENT FEATURE FILM MARKET, Sept. 27 - Oct. 4, NYC. Early registration fees (before Sept. 6) are as follows: US & Canadian buyers ($525); festivals & nonprofits ($275); additional reps ($100 per person). For more info, write IFP, 132 W. 21st St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10011.

INQUEERY/INTHEORY/INDEED, 6th annual North American conference on lesbian, gay & bisexual studies, Nov. 1994, IA. This nat'l conference, 1st called in 1987 at Yale University, has grown from 300 to 3,000 participants. Persons interested in submitting papers, refereeing, adding name to mailing list, exhibiting work at or covering conference should contact conference chair, Gretta Patel, (319) 335-3555 or write 1994 Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual conference steering committee, c/o WRAC, 310 Madison St., University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242.

VIDEO EXPO/IMAGE WORLD, expo for video prod., computer animation, graphics, multimedia, digital imaging & more. Oct. 3-7, NYC; Dec. 6-10, Orlando. Contact: (800) 800-5474 or (914) 328-9157.

Films ▪ Tapes Wanted

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: have you produced a film, video or videodisc on the visual arts? Send information on your prod. to the Program for Art on Film Database, a computer index to over 19,000 prods on the visual arts. We are interested in prods on all visual arts topics, and would welcome information on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film Database, Program for Art on Film, 980 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10021; fax: (212) 628-8963.

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length. Deadlines for Notices will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., August 8 for the October issue). Send to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

BAD TWIN. We had a post office foul-up. If your tape got returned, please resubmit! NY-based prod./exhibition collective seeks films under 30 min. for ongoing programs in Europe & US. Alternative approaches to all genres & forms welcome. Must have finished 16mm prints avail. Submit VHS only for preview; incl. SASE for return. Contact: Bad Twin, Box 528, Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable TV System, seeks works by ind. video & filmmakers for access airing. BRONXNET produces programs & facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, (718) 960-1180.

CAROUSEL, series for municipal cable channels 23 & 49 in Chicago, seeks films/videos for children 12 yrs & under, any length, any genre. Send w/ appropriate releases, list of credits & personal info to: Carousel, c/o Screen Magazine, 720 N. Wabash, Chicago, IL 60611. Tapes will be returned if accompanied by postage.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video art interstitials to play btwn alternative music videos on Seattle's TCI/ Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTER FOR NEW TV (CNTV) seeks 3/4", VHS or Hi8 work for cable access show. Contact: CNTV, 1440 N. Dayton St., Chicago, IL 60622.

CENTRAL AMERICAN NEWS PROJECT seeks indivs to produce news & public affairs pieces for monthly access show on Central America. Contribute footage or contacts w/ people in CA w/ film or video equip. No payment. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St., Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Contact: Cine Accion, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks works on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Laura Greenfield, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (213) 458-8590.

COMEDY CENTRAL seeks comedic student/ind. films & videos up to 3 min. to air on its flagship program, Short Attention Span Theater. Must have broadcast rights. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes to: Josh Lebowitz, HBO Downtown Prods, 120 E. 23rd St., 6th fl., New York, NY 10010; (212) 512-8851.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info., contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, New York, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DEEP DISH TV seeks tapes on healthcare for '94 season. Deadline: Aug. 1993. Contact: Cynthia Lopez, programming director, Deep Dish TV, 339 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10012; (212) 473-8933.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" Beta & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, Middle East, gay/ lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Tanya Steele, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., New York, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Please contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Ronhert Park, CA 94928.

ESSENTIAL CINEMA GROUP is continually accepting works for its Ind. Short Cinema bimonthly film series. 16/35mm short films, 30 min. max. Seeking new experimental, narrative, doc & animation. Send preview tapes on VHS (NTSC, PAL) w/ return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 118 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101. For more info on ECG please write: 2011 Fifth Ave., #301, Seattle, WA 98121-2502 or (206) 441-6181.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on varied subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, Ste 4768, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, New York, NY 10112.

FILMS/VIDEOS WANTED. Shorts under 10 min. for Dyke TV, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-935 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

FULL HOUSE, a night of movies. Monthly fest of short films to screen at 5 cafés from East Village to Saratoga (stops incl. Brooklyn & Albany). Must be avail. on 16mm w/ optical sound. Preview on 16mm or VHS. Send film/tape w/ SASE to: Jack of Hearts Productions, Attn: Michael Ellenbogen, 42 N. Allen St., Albany, NY 12203; (518) 489-2037. If you would like your film to be considered for first annual Full House Extravaganza in NYC March 1994, send $10 fee & be aware film will be needed until April '94.

GREEN COMMUNICATIONS seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Send tape to: 1437 7th St., Ste 305, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (301) 576-6680.

LOS ANGELES CONTEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS

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THE INDEPENDENT

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*. Published 10 times a year, each issue of the magazine includes festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and more. Plus, you'll find thought-provoking features, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters.

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AIVF works directly with many foreign festivals, in some cases collecting and shipping tapes or prints overseas, in other cases serving as the U.S. host to visiting festival directors.

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Members can house copies of their work in the AIVF tape library for screening by visiting festival programmers. Or make your own special screening arrangements with AIVF.

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AIVF has a large mail order catalog of media books, and publishes our own titles on festivals, distribution, and foreign production resources.

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Whether it's freedom of expression, public funding, public TV, contractual agreements, cable legislation, or other issues that affect independents, AIVF is there working for you.

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(LACE) seeks recently completed video art, experimental docs & other innovative video works for ongoing screening program. Send 3/4" or 1/2" tape, description, resumé & SASE to: Tom Dennison, performance & video coordinator, LACE, 1804 Industrial St., Los Angeles, CA 90021; (213) 624-5650.

OLD & NEW MASTERS OF SUPER 8, an invitational festival in 5th yr at Anthology Film Archives, is expanding its reference file of dedicated super 8 filmmakers w/ at least 2 completed films of any length in super 8, who have prints (not just originals) & wish to be considered for this yr's fest & other upcoming super 8 programming. Fest has travelled to Brussels & may reach Vienna, Berlin, Budapest, Tours, Paris, etc., in 1993-4. Send VHS preview transfer of super 8 films w/ SASE return mailer, self-addressed stamped postcard & $5 along w/ file folder of support materials: 50-word bio, resumé, super 8 filmography, stills (labeled on back), photo of yourself (w/ name, address, phone), description of films (duration, fps, sound/silent, color/b&w, yr). Photo, stills, etc. are for catalogs. Deadline: Ongoing, but *do not send materials in Aug.* Send to: Barbara Rosenthal, guest curator, Old & New Masters of Super-8, 727 Ave. of the Americas, New York, NY 10010.

OPEN CITY cable series invites indivs., groups & orgs to submit proposals to produce new cable programming, to air as part of *Artwaves*, Hallwalls Contemporary Art Centers' weekly cable access program. Provides honoraria, prod. & postprod. facilities & technical assistance for indivs to produce programming of interest to diverse urban & rural communities in Western New York. Submissions should incl. 1-page project description, time-frame for prod. & postprod. & applicant's technical experience. Three projects will be selected. Applicants must be residents of Erie, Niagara, Allegheny, Cattaragus, or Chautauqua counties. Student projects not eligible. Contact: Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center, 700 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14202; (716) 854-5828.

ORGONE CINEMA, newly formed group, looking for films/videos for possible exhibition in Pittsburgh area. Prefer VHS for preview. Especially interested in Regular 8, super 8, & 16mm. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, c/o M. Johnson, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PACIFIC ARTS seeks selected domestic & foreign ind. projects—narrative, animation, doc, experimental & performance—to air on wkly cable access show. Any theme, any length. Projects credited. Submit 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Pacific Arts, Box 533, Farmington, MI 48332-0533.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests noncommercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

STONEPINE PRODS seeks submissions of quality, full-length scripts. All genres considered. Contact: 10 Universal City Plaza, Ste 1077A, Universal City, CA 91608-1097; (818) 505-3500.

TV 2000. TV pilot seeks new videos that convey positive images for teens. All genres (art, music & film on video). Send letter of permission to air materials & video to: Daryl Grant, Box 627, Ansonia Station, New York, NY 10023.

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VIRTUAL FOCUS seeks submissions of doc, narrative & art videos for monthly public screenings. Send VHS copies to: Virtual Focus, 6019 Sunset Blvd., Ste 133, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 250-8118.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., New York, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for wkly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

Opportunities ▪ Gigs

FILM/VIDEO ARTS seeks interns in the areas of development & equipment rental. Interns required to work 15 hrs./wk for a minimum of 6 mos. All internships unpaid. Interns receive free access on standby basis to FVA's equipment, facilities, courses & workshops. Responsibilities for the development internship incl. updating mailing list, sending thank-you letters & newsletters to new members, assisting in newsletter prod. coordinating screenings & events. Contact: Duane Butler or Alice Martin, (212) 673-9361. For equipment rental internship, will assemble film/video equipment pkgs; test operation & condition of 16mm cameras, professional camcorders, audio recorders, lights, tripods, mics, etc.; check in/out equipment & test returned equipment. Must have familiarity w/ equipment & good communication skills. Position avail. Monday/Friday or Wednesday/Thursday. Contact: Angie Cohn or Art Jones, (212) 673-9361.

VIDEO ARTIST wanted. Special 1-yr appointment in Photography & Video dept. F/T. Salary & benefits competitive. Responsibilities incl. teaching basic video for non-majors, intro & advanced video for majors & advanced studio seminars in program that emphasizes experimental approaches to art. MFA required, as well as knowledge of video techniques & history of medium grounded in contemporary art theory. Prior college teaching experience preferred. Women & minorities encouraged. Open until filled. Incl. original & 6 photocopies of each: letter of application, teaching philosophy, c.v., 3 refs., no more than 15 min. of video & SASE for return to: Kansas City Art Institute, Video Arts Search, c/o Human Resources, 4415 Warwick Blvd., Kansas City, MO 64111.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for Dyke TV, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

Publications

FELIX, Vol. 1, No. 3, now available. Special "Post-Literate" issue of this video magazine, published by Stand-by program, focuses on "issues of electronic manipulations, language, and the word" in the digital age, "reading electronics, information exchange and media in the broadest sense." Single copies: $6; subscriptions: $15 indiv., $21 institutions. Felix, Box 184,

Prince St. Station, New York, NY 10012.

NAMAC offers 1992 member directory, compilation of resource & contact info relevant to media arts, community, cultural & educational orgs & mediamakers. Incl. descriptions of 132 media arts centers in US & Canada w/ org history, mission, budget, collections, demographics of audiences & artists, facilities, publications, etc. Send check payable to NAMAC ($25 nonmembers/$12 NAMAC members) to: NAMAC, 1212 Broadway, Ste 816, Oakland, CA 94612.

1993 MOTION PICTURE ALMANAC provides info on exhibition, attendance & demographic stats, top-grossing films, theater circuits, film commissions, press & trade publications, etc. Send $85, plus $5.50 s&h to Quigley Publications, 159 W. 53rd St., New York, NY 10019; (212) 247-3100. NY residents add 8.25 percent sales tax. All orders must be prepaid.

Resources ▪ Funds

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE administers for the National Endowment for the Arts a program of grants for independent media artists whose work shows exceptional promise and who have demonstrated a commitment to the art of the moving image. Highly competitive; limited grants. Previous recipients may not reapply. Grants range from $10,000 to $20,000. Applications judged on basis of creativity of proposed project & artistic merit & technical quality of sample work. For info & deadline, contact: American Film Institute, Box 27999, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027. (213) 856-7600.

CHANGE, INC. assists artists of all disciplines w/ emergency aid to avoid eviction or cover medical expenses, unpaid utility bills, fire damage or other emergencies. Grants range from $100 to $500. Send letter describing financial emergency, copies of bills or eviction notice, resumé, announcements of exhibitions, work sample & at least 2 letters of recommendation from field. For info, write: Change, Inc., Box 705, Cooper Station, New York, NY 10276; (212) 473-3742.

THE FUNDING EXCHANGE's Paul Robeson Fund for Ind. Media will supply applications after Sept. 1 for deadline of December 1, 1993. Grant decisions will be announced by March 30, 1994. The fund accepts appls. for doc film & video projects in preprod. or distribution stages only. Projects must address critical political & social issues, have highly developed distribution initiative & have ability to be used for political advocacy &/or organizing purposes. Producers utilizing alternative forms of social issue doc making are encouraged to apply. Applications will not be faxed. Write or call: Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, #500, New York, NY 10012; (212) 529-5300.

MEDIA ALLIANCE Media Arts Fellowship Program offers 3 $5,000 fellowships to emerging artists in media—film, video & related electronic arts. Applicants must be indiv. media artists, age 30 or under, who are residents of New York State based in NYC during fellowship period (Jan. 1-Dec. 31, 1994), economically disadvantaged & have completed college or formal training. Artists of color encouraged to apply. Deadline: Oct. 1. For more info., contact: Media Alliance, c/o Thirteen/WNET, 356 West 58th St., New York, NY 10019; (212) 560-2919.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS announces grants for film/video production. Eligibility: Artists applying as individuals or through orgs may submit only

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NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES (NEH) offers study grants for humanities teachers w/ heavy teaching loads & limited opportunities for professional development. The $3,000 grants provide 6 wks of support during the summer 1994 undertake F/T humanities study. For appl. or guidelines, contact: NEH Study Grants, Rm 316, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8463.

NEH MEDIA PROGRAM accepting appls for projects beginning after April 1, 1994. Deadline: September 11. Supports historical & cultural docs, dramatizations, talk shows, animation, or combinations of these formats. All TV projects must have demonstrable value for nat'l audience, either adult or youth. Projects must involve collaboration w/ humanities scholars at every stage—planning, script preparation & production. Contact: NEH Division of Public Programs, Humanities Projects in Media, Rm 420, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Washington DC 20506; (202) 786-0278.

NEH's division of Public Programs fosters public understanding of humanities through grants from Public Humanities Projects & other programs. Applicants may use wide variety of formats—symposia, debates, reading & group discussion etc.—to reach public. Program especially interested in calling attention to work of humanities scholars. Grants have placed scholars in residence w/ theaters, cultural centers, etc. Program also encourages collaboration among humanities institutions, such as archives, historical societies & museums. Eligible applicants incl. colleges & universities, professional orgs, cultural & community orgs, agencies of state & local government & nonprofit community groups. Deadline: Sept. 17 for programs beginning after April 1, 1994. For guidelines, call (202) 606-8438.

NATIONAL VIDEO RESOURCES' (NVR) Ind. Distributor Assistance Program awards grants of up to $15,000 to profit & nonprofit distributors in areas of market research, technical improvement & business/marketing consultancies. Deadline: Sept. 24, 1993. For guidelines, contact: NVR, 73 Spring St., Ste 606, New York, NY 10012; (212) 274-8080; (212) 274-8081, fax.

NEW YORK STATE COUNCIL ON THE ARTS (NYSCA) is offering support for distribution of recently completed films, radio programs & videos by NYS independent artists. Deadline: Sept. 22. Awards of up to $3,000 towards tape/film duplication, promotional materials or related distribution costs. For guidelines and appl., contact: Electronic Media & Film Program, NYSCA, 915 Broadway, New York, NY 10010; (212) 387-7055.

PENNSYLVANIA HUMANITIES COUNCIL supports humanities projects throughout state. Strong PA connection required, either in subject matter or producer residence. Preliminary proposal drafts 6-8 weeks in advance of deadline recommended. Deadline: Oct. 1. For appl., contact: PHC, 320 Walnut St., Ste 305, Philadelphia, PA 19106-3892; (215) 925-1005.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr, $1,000-$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., New York, NY 10021.

$60,000 SCREENPLAY COMPETITION. Conquest Media is seeking producible film scripts from 60 to 130 pgs. Competition awards up to 3 $20,000 grants for scripts chosen. For rules & info, send SASE to Conquest Media Screenplay Competition, Box 694, Huntsville, AL 35804. Deadline: Feb. 1, 1994.

UCROSS FOUNDATION offers artists 2- to 8-wk. residencies at foot of Big Horn Mts in Wyoming. Appls welcome from artists in all disciplines (visual, literary, film/video, music, scholarly). Deadlines: Oct. 1 for Jan.-May session; March 1 for August-December session. Room, board & studio space provided free of charge. For appl, contact: Executive director, Ucross Foundation, 2836 US Hwy 1416 East, Clearmont, Wyoming 82835; (307) 737-2291.

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MEMORANDA

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 60

AIVF should do something around the Oscars, focusing on nominated shorts and documentaries.

AIVF endorsed the paper presented by the task force (composed of AIVF, NAMAC, the NCIPBP, the Association of Community Media, and the Minority Consortia).

Pennak, from Chicago's Films Inc., ended the meeting with two suggestions: 1) that a Chicago member be included on the list of regional representatives; the board said Pennak would be good; 2) find a way of conferencing within computer networks.

The next board meeting will be held in New York in October. AIVF members are welcome to attend. For date, time, and location, contact: Membership director, (212) 473-3400.

AIVF

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AIVF seeks 4 interns for fall semester: 1 membership intern; 2 administrative; 1 magazine. Each internship entails 10 hrs/wk during workday hours. Flexible schedule. Depending on school affiliation, work study or college credit an option. No production work involved.

Interns receive $100/mo plus 2-yr subscription to *The Independent*, choice of 3 books & free admission to AIVF seminars. Send cover letter & resume to: Fall internships, Membership director, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., NY, NY 10012

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In 1988, AIVF member Louis Hock signed a two-year contract with Facets Multimedia in Chicago to distribute VHS copies of his video series *The Mexican Tapes: Chronicle of Life Outside the Law*. When the contract expired in 1990, Hock notified Facets that he did not want it renewed. According to Hock, the distributor has continued to produce copies from a dub master and to sell the tape, ignoring Hock's repeated requests to stop. Since 1990, Hock says he has received no financial compensation from Facets. He is preparing a law suit and would like to hear from anyone who has had similar experiences with the company. Contact Louis Hock, 903 26th St., San Diego, CA 92101; (619) 534-2915.

GET ON-LINE

Mediamakers Online Service (MOS) is now open to callers. The computer bulletin board system is the new electronic gathering place for professionals in the film and video production industry. Buy and sell equipment, chat with distant colleagues, locate a crew in remote locations, and more. Call (800) 283-7550 for the number for your modem, then set your modem to 8,N,1 and log on. See you on MOS.

SMPTE OFFER TO AIVF

The Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers (SMPTE) will hold its 135th Technical Conference and Equipment Exhibit at the Los Angeles Convention Center, October 30 through November 2.

The society has provided AIVF with a limited number of complimentary passes to the event. Passes will be distributed to AIVF members on a first come, first served basis. If you would like to attend the conference, please send a request together w/ SASE to AIVF, 625 Broadway, New York, NY 10012.

P.O.V. WANTS YOUR OPINION

PBS's *P.O.V.* series is planning a "talk back" segment for the end of the summer. Viewers around the country are encouraged to send point-of-view videos in response to programs aired on *P.O.V.* this season and the most interesting will be assembled for broadcast. Independent producers are welcome to submit material of up to two minutes as long as it's produced specifically for the *P.O.V.* segment. Please let your friends and colleagues know about the low-tech "interactive" effort. Contact: *P.O.V.*, Box 750, Old Chelsea Station, NY, NY 10113.

MINUTES FROM THE AIVF/ FIVF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The board of directors of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) met in Chicago on June 6, 1993. In attendance were Robert Richter (president), Ruby Lerner (ex officio), Bart Weiss, Loni Ding, Dai Sil Kim-Gibson, Debbi Zimmerman (chairperson), and Joan Braderman. Also present were Patricia Thomson, editor of *The Independent*, and Chicago AIVF member Kirk Pennak of Films Inc.

Regarding the upcoming board elections, Lerner noted that the only addition to the list of nominees was Bart Weiss. Current board members running for re-election are: Zimmerman, Ding, Davis, and Weiss. Zimmerman suggested a task force to talk to nominees and make them realize running for the board is a serious commitment.

The board discussed implementing two- vs. three-year terms for board members beginning with the 1992 election. The board discussed the benefits of a two-term limit, with Lerner pointing out that it ensures the opportunity for new blood. Weiss amended the motion to include a two-year term limit with the option of running again after a one-year recess.

The 1993 election procedures for the board of directors were outlined as follows: July 15 deadline for 100 word statement; ballots sent out August 1; returns postmarked by September 1; nominees should be notified of the dates for the fall board meeting.

Zimmerman proposed a task force to look at the board replacement process. Lerner said Richter, Ding, and Braderman will communicate with nominees about the responsibilities of being on the board. Information about board attendance requirements will be included in the board orientation packet. The question of adding two slots to the board will be considered by the board election procedure committee. The board agreed to continue weighted voting this year.

Lerner reviewed the initial draft of the National Endowment for the Arts Advancement Grant with the board and reviewed the timetable. She explained that AIVF will request $47,500 in grant monies.

Lerner reviewed reasons for having two organizations (AIVF & FIVF), saying that FIVF is not able to do direct lobbying. She then reviewed the 1993 budget and discussed best- and worst-case scenario budgets. The major differences are in rent income. The board decided AIVF should actively seek tenants for vacant rental space for which the which organization is the landlord.

In regard to a projected postal increase for nonprofits in the coming year, Lerner explained that a bill in the House now will increase postage rates only 2.2¢/piece per year. Elimination of funds to 501c6 organizations is likely to go through in October. This affects advocacy & membership mailings, but not the magazine. The board recommended an increase in the advocacy line in the budget.

Lerner added that in 1993, she plans to move current publishing projects along to get more earned income. *The Africa Guide* will be produced inexpensively on desktop. If there's a demand, it will be made available on disk.

The board discussed adding a box on the membership form for a $5 add-on for advocacy purposes. Richter suggested giving advertising rate discounts in *The Independent* for AIVF members. These options will be explored by staff.

AIVF's 20th anniversary is in 1994; FIVF's is in 1995. Zimmerman suggested starting now to build relations with a director currently in production, in order to get a benefit preview screening. For a national profile, the board suggested coming up with an idea that can go to 20 different media arts centers. Zimmerman also suggested sponsoring an event at Sundance in 1994. Richter said

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Meet

Erika de Hadeln

Festival Director
Nyons Film Festival
and
Acting Director
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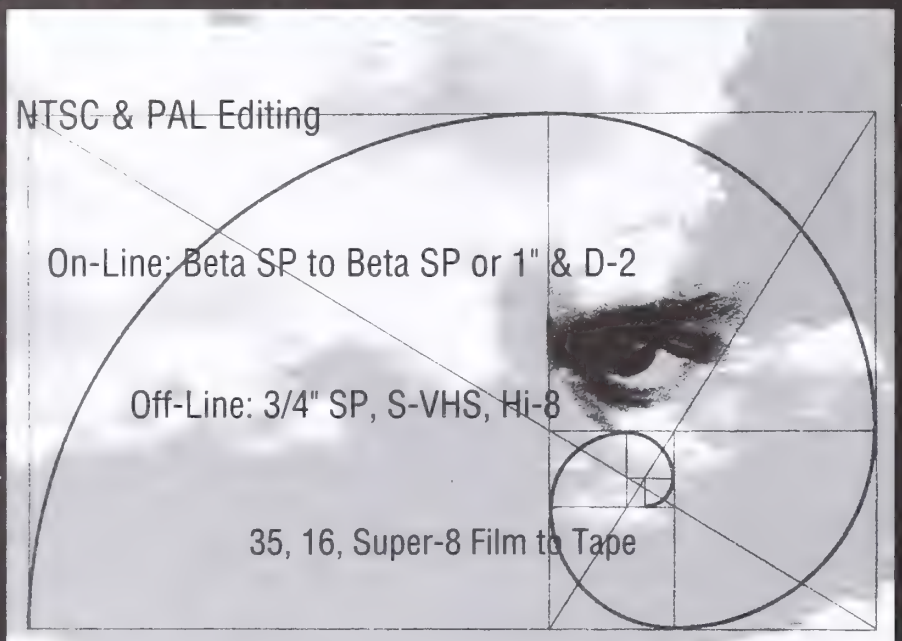
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THE INDEPENDENT

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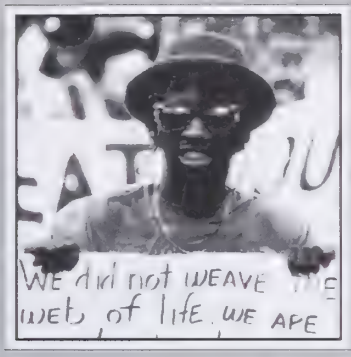
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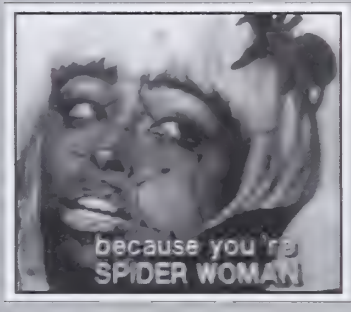
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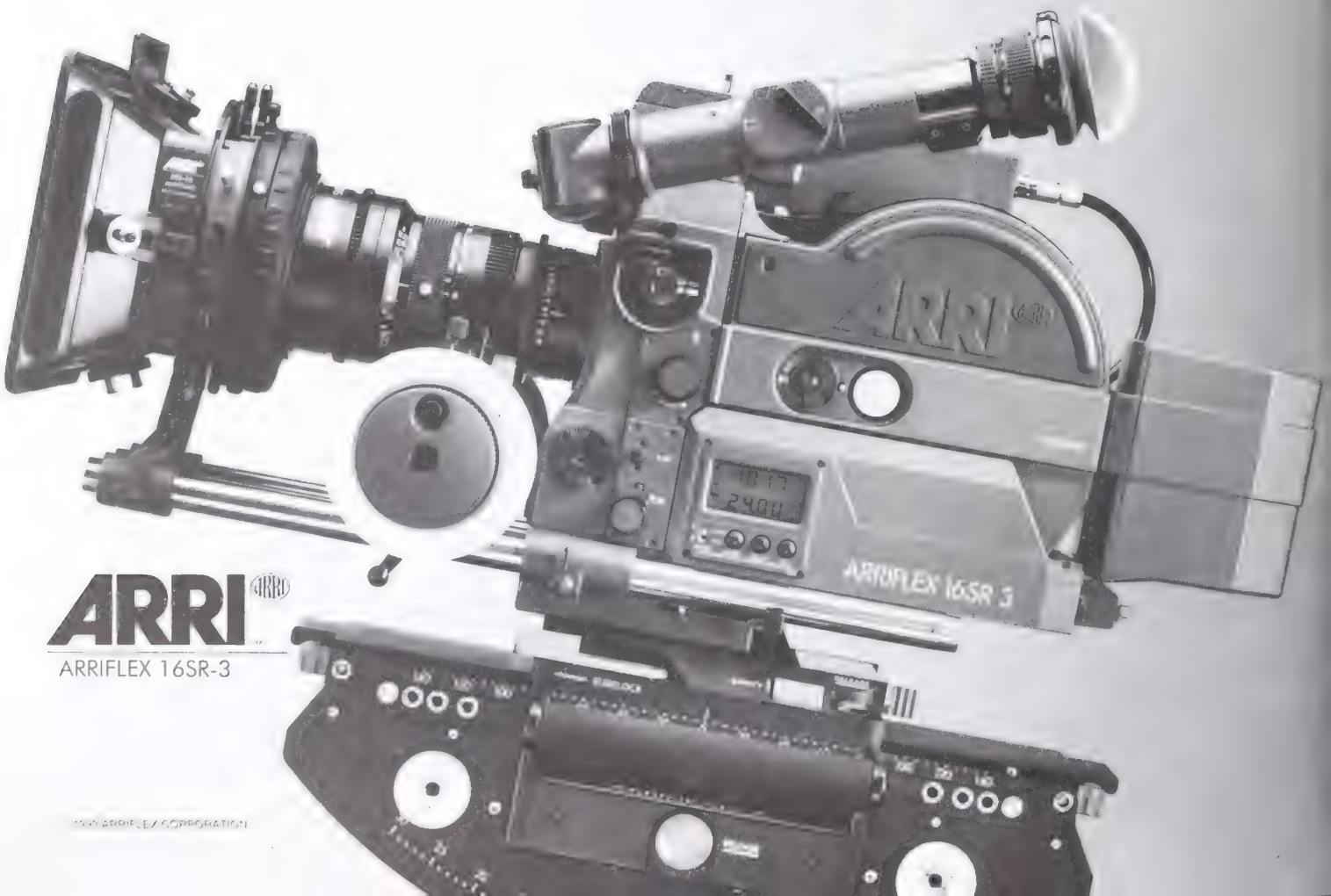
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LETTERS

HUSH, DON'T CRY

To the editor:

Regarding Lindsay Law's comment that he made *All the Vermeers in New York* to "hush up" Jon Jost [Talking Heads, July 1993], the pittance that Law paid for *Vermeers* was not enough to hush anybody up, let alone Jost. The film was made for *less than 1.5 percent* of the entire estimated annual budget that Law cites in the interview. Next time, just send the cash in a plain brown bag and forget the production—then maybe we'll all shut up.

For his meager bribe, Law got a film that won the Caligari Prize at the Berlin Film Festival; was named Best Independent Film by the LA Film Critics; received nominations for best cinematography and best original score from the Independent Feature Project; got very good reviews; appeared at festivals worldwide; had a successful theatrical run in in several European and American cities; and now has a life on video and laserdisc. So, in spite of what Law may think of it, a lot of people found *Vermeers* to be a very good film. American Playhouse benefitted from all of the positive publicity, and Law can point to *Vermeers* the next time he wants to refute those critics who generalize (with considerable justification) about his "American Playhouse-type productions."

Now that the word is out that Law pays hush money, I hope he finds independents camped out on his front steps every day, demanding an opportunity to be bought off in the name of "balancing the needs of public broadcasting."

Jon A. English,
composer, All the Vermeers in New York
San Rafael, CA

Howard Feinstein responds:

When I asked Law if he were the "producer analog to director Jon Jost, a notorious kvetch," he replied, "We made *All the Vermeers in New York* to hush Jost up." Getting someone off your back is not the same as paying hush money. It is a travesty to confuse the terms and to misuse the quote as the basis for an attack on Law's morality. Next time, check your thesaurus.

CHICAGO'S ACCESS-ABILITY

To the editor:

Your "Spotlight on Chicago" issue [June 1993] contains a glaring omission. While Sue Telingator's article makes reference to local independents' disappointment with PBS station WTTW, no mention is made of opportunities available at Chicago Access Corporation (CAC). There is not even a reference to training opportunities in the Chicago Resources section.

CAC is one of the largest and most widely used public access centers in the country, having served over 1,900 Chicago nonprofits and over 2,000 Chicago residents to date. Chicago Access Network (CAN) TV channels are the only channels that *actively* include a diversity of Chicagoans.

In addition to *Feedback* and *Hard Cover*, two series cablecast on CAN-TV which are cited in the June issue, CAN-TV programming includes voices rarely heard and faces seldom seen on television.

As the commercial interests, lobbyists, and legislature plan the telecommunications future for this country, it is critical that publications such as *The Independent* share information with its readers about the value and importance of public access television centers such as CAC, along with information about the independent video community. We need to stand together for the right to speak, be heard, and communicate with each other using television, bringing our issues and concerns to public light.

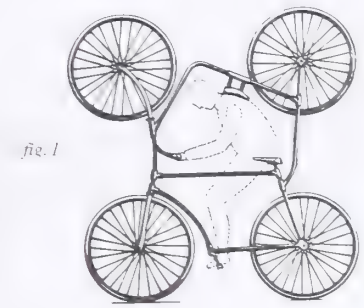
Barbara Popovic
executive director
Chicago Access Corporation
Chicago, Illinois

To the editor:

I read your "Spotlight on Chicago" with much interest. The reports on independent producers are very insightful and give recognition to their work.

I noticed a point in the article "Taking Politics Seriously" that may need some clarification. *The Imagemaker*, a video that Warren Leming and I produced, was done as a Labor Beat project. One could misconstrue from its placement in the article that it was a Media Process project. Although I have worked with Bob Hercules on several projects, *The Imagemaker* was not one that involved him.

Frank Dina
Chicago, IL


fig. 1

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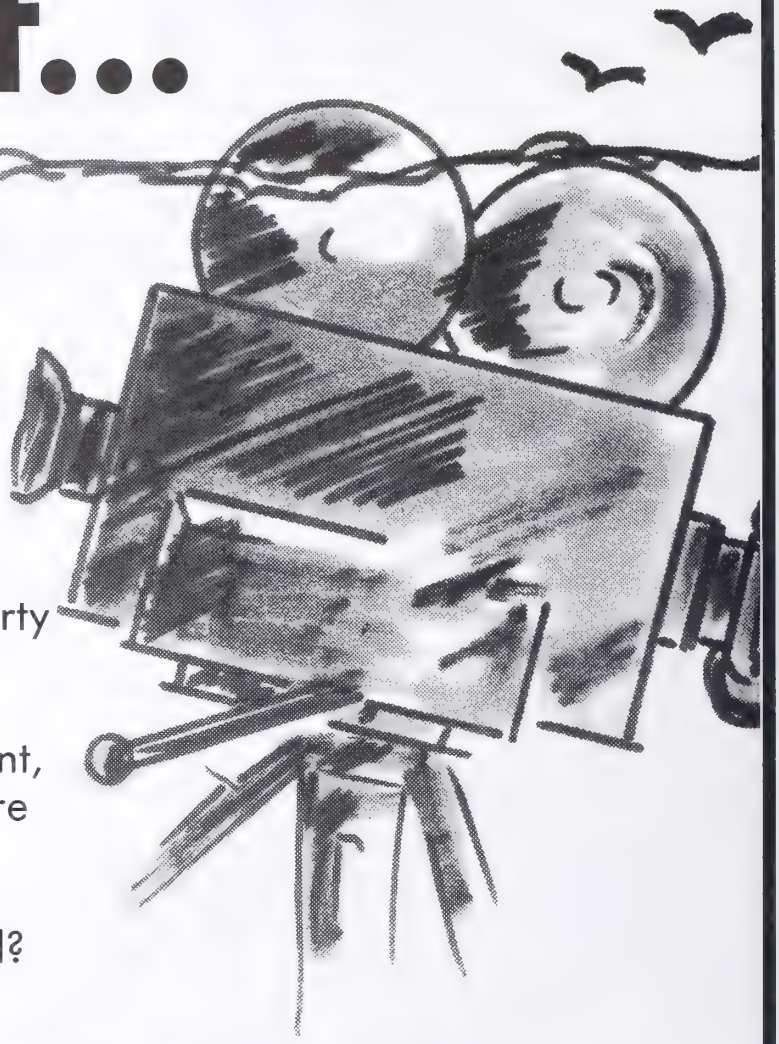
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OUT OF FOCUS

WNET Gives *Independent Focus* the Heave-Ho

A current joke circulating amongst staffers at WNET in New York is that the station's call letters stand for "We're Not Even Trying." Late in June, the flagship public television station announced it would close its acquisitions division, responsible for programming *Independent Focus* and coproducing *New Television*. Staffers Cara Mertes, development and acquisitions producer, and Andrea Traubner, director of acquisitions, both received pink slips. Following WNET's controversial decision, sister station WGBH Boston announced that after 11 years, it would cease its involvement with the New TV Workshop and would no longer copresent *New Television*. Together, WNET and WGBH have sent a strong message to the independent community that support for work at the local level has all but disappeared.



WNET's cancellation of *Independent Focus* has left many independent filmmakers out in the cold. *Far from Poland*, a documentary directed by Jill Godmilow, is one of hundreds of works selected to air on the program during its 16-year run on public television.

Photo: David Dekok, courtesy Beach Street Productions

Since 1977, *Independent Focus*, arguably PBS' most daring local independent acquisition series, has presented more than 500 films and tapes of noted independents. After WNET halted production of the series in June, all submissions for the current season were returned. Reruns from previous seasons were aired from the end of July through early September. Mertes planned to arrange for archival facilities to house previous seasons' tapes. Mertes' departure from the station signals an additional loss for independents since she frequently served as a liaison to other PBS affiliates interested in acquiring independently produced programming.

As for *New Television*, the series began its final season under WGBH and WNET's mantle in early August. *New Television*, begun in 1985, has provided a broadcast venue for video art and limited production funding to video artists such as Bill Viola, Ken Kobland, Joan Logue, and Charles Atlas.

Marie Salerno, WNET's director of communications, reports that the decision to dismantle the acquisitions department was due to the "great amount of duplication" in opportunities for independents. "In the past, *Independent Focus* provided a venue for a wide variety of programs. There were few alternatives available." Now, she says, public television has many. A letter sent to independent producers from Bruce D. Mundt, WNET's director of programs, echoed this rationale. Indeed, producers who called *Independent Focus* in July were greeted with a voicemail message that suggested they "might wish to submit programs to *New Television, P.O.V.*, or the Independent Television Service."

Mertes says WNET may have felt it was not getting enough return on its investment to keep *Independent Focus* alive. Moreover, the network was eager to rid itself of the attention surrounding *Independent Focus,* some of which was controversial. Each season there was a "tape that presented concerns," Mertes says, noting that the last three seasons had included Victor Schonfeld's *Shattered Dreams: Picking Up the Pieces*, about the Israeli peace movement, Peg Ahwesh's sexually heuristic *Martina's Playhouse*, and Debra Chasnoff's indictment of General Electric, *Deadly Deception*. Mertes notes she frequently had to answer calls and mail from irate viewers, while the network's senior executives had to devote time to fielding questions from the press. "It had become too much of a strain on the station," Mertes says.

Whatever WNET's reason for cancelling *Independent Focus*, Mertes says the budget could not have been among them. The entire budget for the series amounted to approximately $120,000-150,000, including a $50,000 acquisition budget. Salerno, who would not confirm the figure, reports that money saved through the cutbacks will be channeled into production designed for the tri-state area and its audiences.

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In response to WNET's actions, the Association for Independent Video- and Filmmakers (AIVF) sent a letter on behalf of its members to WNET president William Baker explaining why *New Television*, *P.O.V.*, *Alive TV*, and ITVS were not alternatives for independents turned away by WNET.

"*P.O.V.*," writes Ruby Lerner, executive director of AIVF, "acquires only non-fiction material. *Alive TV* has historically been primarily a commissioning series rather than an acquisitions series, and has focused on live performance rendered for television. The Independent Television Service is a production fund and currently has no acquisitions function. As exciting as *New Television* is, it is a much narrower series than *Independent Focus*, interested exclusively in video art."

In addition to Lerner's letter and a subsequent meeting she had with Mundt, AIVF organized a letter-writing campaign. The campaign targeted prominent figures in the New York advocacy community, informed them about the changes at WNET, and encouraged them to write letters voicing their concern regarding the elimination of WNET's acquisitions arm. At press time, the advocates were attempting to schedule a meeting with WNET brass to both request the reinstatement of *Independent Focus* and to make a case for a year-round independents' showcase, to be scheduled in a better time slot.

Also placed in limbo by WNET's recent decision was the Media Alliance office, which has been housed since 1979 at the station under Mertes' budget. (She is board president of Media Alliance.) In a meeting with Kathy High, the alliance's then interim executive director, WNET executives said they would negotiate Media Alliance's stay at the West 57th Street location.

As if the cancellation of *Independent Focus* wasn't enough bad news for independent makers, WGBH in Boston recently announced it would no longer copresent the *New Television* series and closed the New TV Workshop, one of three TV labs started in the mid-seventies to foster the production of independent works at a local level. Susan Dowling, who ran the workshop out of WGBH since 1982, left the station in August and took most of the workshop projects with her. The separation, says Dowling, is by mutual consent, but the situation is "not as grim as it appears. *New Television* and other projects will survive. The New Television Workshop as a part of WGBH is over, but the activity won't die."

Connecticut Public Television (CPTV) agreed to house the *New Television* series beginning in the fall, and, with CPTV acting as its presenting station, the series is expected to return next season. Dowling says that Connecticut Public Television's interest and enthusiasm remind her of WGBH's 14 years ago. "I'm feeling quite optimistic," she says. "In anything difficult, there's an opportunity."

Mediamakers wishing to voice their support for *Independent Focus* should write: William Baker, president, WNET-TV, 356 W. 58th St., New York, NY 10019.

BARBARA BLISS OSBORN

Barbara Bliss Osborn, a contributing editor for The Independent, *reports on PBS and other media from Los Angeles.*

WHERE'S THE CASH? PACIFIC ARTS DOLES OUT I.O.U.S

In a memo to public television stations and producers back in August 1992, PBS announced a controversial policy that gave the network first dibs on institutional and home video rights for all PBS funded productions ["Risky Business: PBS Links Production Funding to Video Rights," December 1992]. In response, independent producers, nonprofit institutions, businesses, and media arts centers—concerned about possible negative effects on the industry—joined together to form the Coalition for Public Television Program Access and Diversity, which has, for the last year, been calling for PBS to rescind its distribution policy. Now the coalition has even greater reason for complaint since San Francisco-based Pacific Arts Video, the company that operates PBS Home Video, appears to be in deep financial trouble and has begun to send producers I.O.U.s instead of royalty checks.

The first sign of Pacific Arts Video's shaky financial standing came in June, when Maria Elena Flood, vice chair at PBS, told the network's board of directors that the company had fallen behind in paying royalties and is having "many problems." According to recent estimates by the network, PBS Home Video's losses this fiscal year may be as high as $542,000, and it is owed approximately $1 million in license fees by Pacific Arts. As Larry Adelman, codirector of the nonprofit distributor California Newsreel, puts it,"Pacific Arts is drowning, and it's taking PBS with it."

The problem seems to have stemmed, in part, from bad judgements in marketing and pricing. People in the industry have questioned whether PBS could actually garner the large consumer market it would need to sell enough of its limited-audience, $19.95-priced cassettes to cover costs. PBS's attempt to simultaneously straddle the mass and special interest markets is evidently a strategy that is failing.

According to Adelman, it's the smaller independent producers who are hurt the most. "PBS has never had a problem marketing the blockbusters such as *The Civil War* series, which was backed by a $1.5 million marketing budget from General Motors, but the real problem comes with the rest of us who don't get that type of budget. We get lost in the cracks and don't get the promotion or the royalties," he says.

Many producers, who already feel trapped and

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exploited by PBS's distribution policy, are angered by the frustrating predicament they are now forced to face. Says Robert Richter, independent producer and chair of AIVF's board of directors, who also represents AIVF on the Coalition for Public Television Program Access and Diversity: "They are asking us to accept that this policy is in ours and the public's best interest even though producers aren't being paid, PBS is losing money, and other distributors are being denied the opportunity to bid for programs they can market more efficiently than Pacific Arts."

In an August 5, 1993, letter to Robert Ottenhoff, PBS's acting president, the coalition called for a meeting with PBS executives to discuss current distribution policy in light of what the coalition considers to be Pacific Art's breach of contract. They hope to get PBS to open up bidding for distribution rights, change its current distribution policy, and assure them that the network will not cut funding to compensate for their losses.

Peter Downey, senior vice president of program business affairs at PBS, responded to the coalition's letter by stating, "Like any startup business, [PBS Home Video] has its ups and downs, but our sights remain focused on the long-term benefits of assuring that high-quality public TV programs have a long life after they air — both in the classroom and the home. Our goal, as always, is public service — not private gain." PBS also stated that it had no plans to alter its arrangement with Pacific Arts or to rescind its distribution policy.

SUE MURRAY

Sue Murray is the editorial assistant for The Independent.

SHOOTING GALLERY ON TARGET WITH DIVERSIFICATION

When the Shooting Gallery opened its doors more than two years ago in lower Manhattan, it provided a space—albeit a small, less-than-luxurious one—in which independent film- and videomakers could shoot and edit their no- to low-budget productions. In the last year alone, 80 makers, ranging from John Gilroy (*Keep the Change*) to Whitney Ransick (*Handgun*), have taken advantage of the Shooting Gallery's small soundstage as well as its casting, rehearsal, and editing facilities. Yet some of the space's initial users, including Hal Hartley and Nick Gomez, have since made names for themselves and could easily film in more lavish production environments.

Rather than lose the business of those on the rise, the Shooting Gallery's founders have done everything in their power to keep higher-budget independents coming back. For starters, they vacated their rental space at 359 Broadway last summer in favor of a newer, larger, more permanent facility in Lower Manhattan. Larry Meistrich, the Shooting Gallery's president, says the new space provides a place to make films with budgets



Terry Serpico appears in the feature *Kiss It Goodbye*, one of many low-budget productions to film at the Shooting Gallery. The Manhattan-based facility plans to imove to a larger space this fall to accommodate the increasing number of independent productions in both New York and Hollywood.

Photo: Russ Wasoleck, courtesy filmmaker

from $50,000 to $10 million. "We hope to have the $10 million films subsidize the lower-budget productions," he says optimistically.

The new space has three floors of rental offices (as small as six feet by six feet—complete with phone, fax, and receptionist), a screening room, and a moderately sized soundstage. Says Meistrich, "We're not trying to compete with Kaufman Astoria or Silver Cup." In addition to offering production space and state-of-the-art editing facilities, the new space, says Meistrich, will be part of "an independent studio system" that will serve to finance and distribute productions as well as to record and market their soundtracks. "Investors will get four things for their dollar rather than one," Meistrich adds, referring to the production/financing/distribution/recording package. "And we will create a place that completely services the independent community from Hollywood as well as New York City."

The Shooting Gallery is now raising capital to compete in all four areas of the industry. Meistrich says he hopes to begin financing projects by year's end. In the meantime, he is shoring up relations with local unions. "We want to be able to do projects that cost a couple hundred thousand dollars with their blessing," he says.

Those wanting more information on rates or financing opportunities should contact Meistrich at (212) 243-3042.

MICHELE SHAPIRO

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of The Independent.

NEW EURO FILM SCHOOLS WOO AMERICANS

American independent mediamakers often dream of breaking into the European television market. But how many have tried to learn the ropes in college or at the graduate level? Two new European schools merit consideration by filmmakers at an early stage in their careers, especially since informal contacts made in educational institutions often prove important in later life.

Let's dispense with the main anxieties about study abroad: foreign languages and costs. Yes, the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne, Germany, demands speaking and writing knowledge of German, but that can be acquired beforehand in intensive courses. (Consumer tip: private language schools in Germany and Austria generally offer much lower prices than the Goethe Institutes in the U.S.) Once a student is admitted to a German institution of higher learning, tuition is free—and at the Academy that includes the use of state-of-the-art equipment. At the more humanistically oriented European Film College, located on the beautiful Danish coast, all instruction is in English, and the cost of room, board, and tuition is $200 per week for the eight-month program.

The Academy of Media Arts, founded in 1990, offers a two-year graduate-level program. (The average student age is 28.) An undergraduate program will begin in 1994. The Academy's Film and Television section focuses on documentary and feature-film directing in the tradition of New German Cinema (using 35mm and 16mm), while its Media Art department produces experimental video and film drawing on the Academy's laser disc and holography labs, and an analog and digital postproduction studio. A sound lab is in the works as well. A third section in Media Design teaches students to apply new technologies to the needs of museums, private companies, and television. Professor Heide Hagebölling notes, however, that students are not confined to the courses of one department: "Not only can they study with teachers in other sections, we constantly send them to do so." Classes are small—five to 10 students—and there's the possibility of learning from conversations with the six to eight visiting artists who have fellowships at the Academy each year.

Of course, Americans can learn how to use new media at home. But Kirk Woolford, an American with a fellowship in interactive programs and electronic images at the Academy, observes, "In the U.S., you tend to learn *how* to do all sorts of things, but not *why*." The Academy addresses this issue. Professor Manfred Eisenbeis is a graduate of the late Hochschule für Gestaltung in Ulm, West Germany, which, after the Nazi debacle, reactivated the Bauhaus tradition of linking design to innovations in science and technology, and

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his courses consider the cultural impact and artistic context of new techniques. "We've tried to create an interdisciplinary 'electronic Bauhaus' which can serve as a brain factory, so that creative and intellectual developments are not left to the business sector alone," Hagebölling said during an interview with *The Independent*.

Americans who have completed their studies in a related field (which can include literary criticism, art, and design) should request information and applications as soon as possible. Admission is dependent on an applicant's curriculum vitae, an interview, and his or her completion of a project set by the Academy. In the past, all applicants were given the same topic and asked to explore it using the medium of their choice.

The European Film College, launched in January 1993 in the village of Ebeltoft in Denmark, comes out of a very different tradition: the adult education movement begun by the Danish reformer N.F.S. Grundtvig (1783-1872). Since his goal was to reach men and women whether or not they go on to a university, the college requires no degrees or entrance exams and gives no tests or grades. Instead, students receive a diploma listing the courses they attended. Using Cambridge University as his model, Grundtvig believed that the residential experience is crucial to raising students' self-esteem. The college, perhaps because of its relative isolation (45 minutes by car from the Danish university town of Aarhus), is a small, intense campus where students and faculty interact outside of classes on film-related projects and at screenings. There were 101 students in the first course, and while the minimum age for applicants is 19, the average student is 26.

Judging by its curriculum, the college seems best for those who have not majored in film and video and who want to begin to explore these fields to see where they might fit in. Although students will get to experiment with video equipment and to study acting and directing, this is not a traditional film school offering professional education. Principal Bjorn Erichsen stresses, "You can't learn how to produce a film here, but you can learn how film is produced." The eight instructors for September 1993 through April 1994 have been chosen for their broad cultural interests—they are not merely film specialists—and their courses will investigate film genres, European television as an opinion shaper, framing in art and film, storytelling and dramaturgy, the impact of new technology, contemporary European politics, and the effects of sound and music. European film is the emphasis, but one instructor, Mark Le Fanu is at work on a book on Japanese filmmaker Kenji Mizoguchi, and another, Galina Antipenko, is a graduate of a Soviet film school, so other cultures are represented.

Invited speakers have included actor Max von Sydow, film historian Peter Cowie, a Russian cinematographer, a British television producer, a Hungarian director and screenwriter, and a German "king of underground pornography." Clearly, every effort is being made to keep the close world of the college connected with the greater world outside.

There is no deadline for applications, but it is best to apply by February 1994 for the '94-95 academic year since places are limited to 46 foreign students and 46 Danes for each eight-month course. Contact: Mr. Bjorn Erichsen, European Film College, DK-8400 Ebeltoft, Denmark; tel:45-86-34-00-55, fax: 45-86-34-05-35.

At the Academy of Media Arts, contact: The Students' Office, Peter-Welter-Platz 2, D-W-5000 Cologne 1, Germany; tel. 49-221-201-890, fax: 49-221-201-17.

KAREN ROSENBERG

Karen Rosenberg, a film and literary critic, lives in Vienna.

LESBIANS WANT THEIR *DYKE TV*

Amidst the chaos of Colorado's virulently homophobic Amendment Two, President Clinton's flip-flop over queers in the military, and the firebombing of an HIV-positive lesbian activist's home in Tampa Bay, Florida, a ballsy, out and loud, four-inch tall lesbian inside the television

The European Film College, located in Ebeltoft, Denmark, opened its doors in January 1993 and accepts 46 foreign students each year.

Courtesy European Film College

sets of New York City yells, "I want my *DYKE TV*."

Gay Cable Network, Lavender Lounge, In the Life—the lesbian and gay community in New York City and other enclaves nationwide can currently tune into these (and a few other) primarily white, gay male-produced cable shows. But where are the lesbians? Four years ago in New Mexico, *Intergalactic Lesbian Video* jumpstarted its sapphic engines and premiered a half-hour monthly installment of lesbian cable programming. And this April, *DYKE TV* emerged from the ruins of New York City's AIDS-torn, ozone-challenged, ever-incestuous lesbian community. Now, every week gay girls in the city can turn themselves on—and learn a thing or two—in the comfort of their own homes.

DYKE TV, the brainchild of executive producers Linda Chapman, Mary Patierno, and Ana Marie Simo, has taken the city's exceptionally diverse, political workhorse of a community by storm. The series follows a magazine format, covering both news and cultural events. In "Lesbian Health," one recent segment zeroed in on a half-nude dyke with a speculum in her vagina explaining the ins and outs of a cervical self-exam. "The Arts" runs the gamut with filmmakers (Cheryl Dunye, Joan Jubela), performers (Carmelita Tropicana), painters, and dancers. "Sports" provides campy and inspiring investigations into such dyke circles as Brooklyn Women's Martial Arts and local rugby fields. There's at least one in-depth news report at the beginning of each show and a "Calendar" segment at the tail end. However, the segment to tune in for is called, "I Was a Lesbian Child," complete with old tomboy photos and amusing reminiscences.

"*Gay Cable Network* just didn't satisfy us," says Chapman. "*In the Life* wasn't really addressing the needs of the lesbian community. Nothing we were aware of was talking about our issues. So we wanted to get out the kind of information that isn't available, particularly in the area of news. And we wanted to show off the talent we know exists in the lesbian community, which gets dissipated into other groups and in other ways." She adds, "We wanted this to be for us and not an apology to the straight world."

Chapman and Simo started a nonprofit organization three years ago called Sang-Froid Ltd. because they had collaborated on theater pieces and both wanted to take more advantage of media. Chapman had been working with the Wooster Group for over 10 years, and Simo had just completed her first film, *How to Kill Her*. Their friend and the third founding member, Mary Patierno, is an experienced film/videomaker and editor. The two formative events that led to *DYKE TV* were

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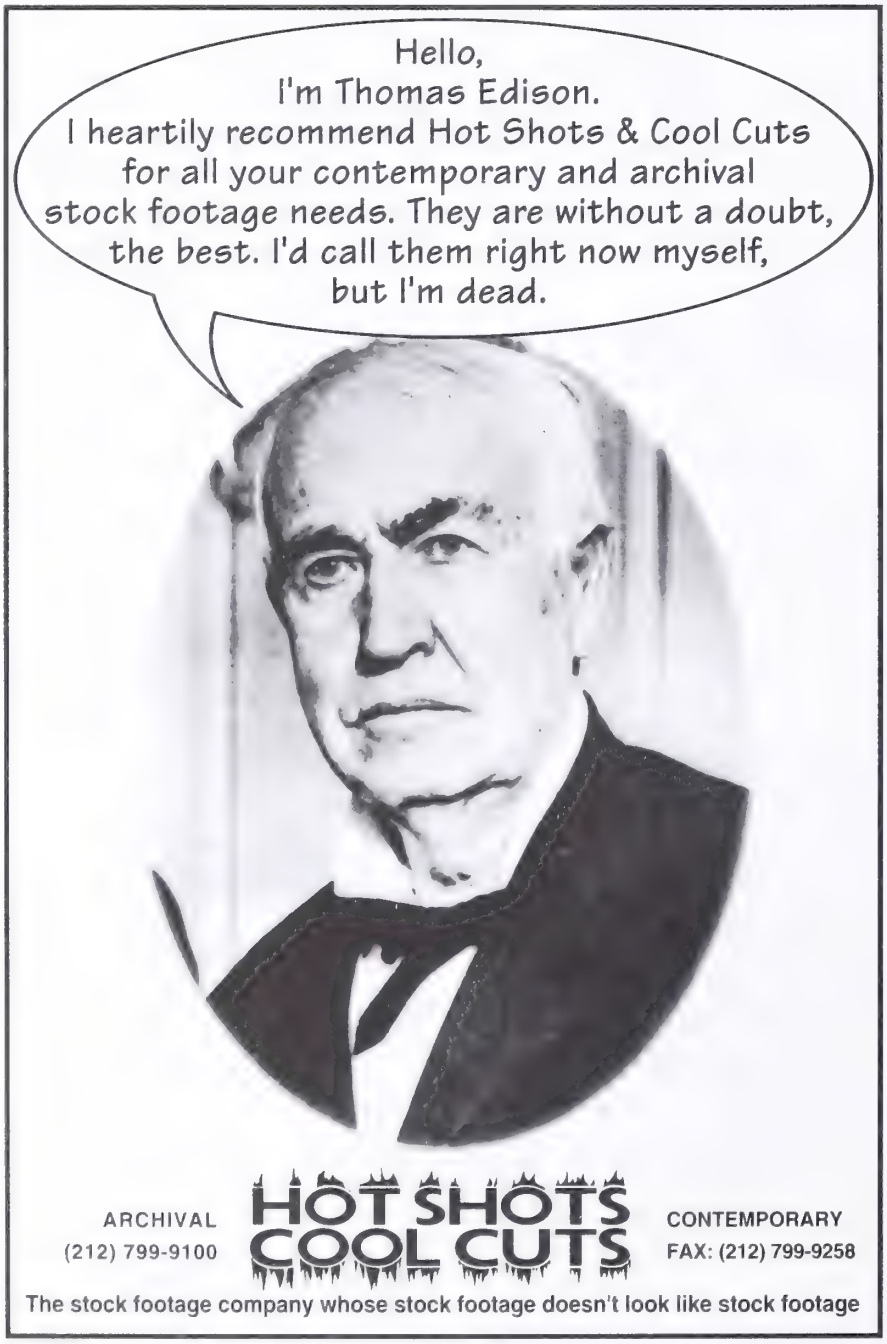
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Out and proud: Donating their time and skills to DYKE TV, a new cable access program targeted at lesbians in the New York area, regular contributors Sally Susso and Susan Muska tape a segment on location.

Photo: Donna Binder, courtesy Impact Visual

the inspirational passion and right-on commitment of the direct action Lesbian Avengers, a movement formed to promote dyke visibility and survival, and the premiere of Manhattan Neighborhood Network's two new cable access channels in December 1992. (*DYKE TV* now airs on one of them.)

Not including the endless in-kind services (provided by a veritable legion of volunteers, which includes the executive producers), four segments of *DYKE TV* cost $3,000 to $4,000. Seed money was planted after a request for application from the previously quiet but increasingly well-endowed Legacy Fund approached the *DYKE TV* producers and asked them to apply for a grant. The popular "Passion Party" benefit on Lesbian and Gay Pride Night brought in another several thousand. Chapman confirms that the show is now functioning on "pretty much of a shoestring."

It remains unclear how a media-starved girl-into-girls could get her *DYKE TV* if she doesn't live in New York, New Mexico, or Berlin (where the collectively produced *Läsbisch TV* presents similar lesbo fare every other week). Eager to dig their tripod legs into the greater New York City area before expanding into other cities, the visionary producers have a long-range plan for *DYKE TV* to go national. "We definitely want to cover the scene in a bigger way than just Manhattan," muses Chapman. The producers plan to hook into the wider world of lesbians via the Deep Dish TV national satellite network next spring. They're currently seeking funds to cover the cost of an uplink and are actively soliciting volunteer stringers from around the country.

DYKE TV airs on Channel 34 on Manhattan's Time Warner Cable Network Tuesdays at 8 p.m. and Wednesdays at 1:00 p.m. You can catch the *DYKE TV* posse at Box 88, 128 E. Broadway, NY, NY 10002-9990; (212) 343-9335; fax: 9337.

CATHERINE SAALFIELD

Catherine Saalfied is a film/videomaker and AIDS educator living in Manhattan.

JOHN M. CULKIN: 1927-1993

Dr. John M. Culkin, a leading media critic and a founding member of AIVF, died of complications from cancer in July. He was 65 and lived in Manhattan.

From 1969 until his death, Culkin directed the Center for Understanding Media, which he founded. The center conducts research and carries out projects in education, communications, and



the arts. Culkin recognized that film, radio, and television had a profound impact on America's youth and, as a result, he advocated media education and quality television for young people.

In addition to advising the creators of *Sesame Street*, Culkin helped organize televised instruction for parochial schools during the 1960s and, in 1970, proposed a cable channel for children. In 1969, he left Fordham University, where he served as head of the Center for Communications, and the Jesuit priesthood to form the Center for Understanding Media. His center administered the film portion of the Artists in Schools program of the National Endowment for the Arts and curated Metropolitan Area Film Instructors Association, a forum for filmmakers in the education field that previewed important films.

SEQUELS

A settlement was reached in August between the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) and the National Alliance of Media Arts Centers (NAMAC) over the **subgrants to three gay and lesbian film festivals** ["Radice's Last Stand," January/February 1993]. After former acting chair Anne Imelda Radice vetoed NAMAC's Media Arts Fund grants to the New Festival, the Pittsburgh International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, and the Gay and Lesbian Coalition, NAMAC filed a formal appeal with the NEA and also began to prepare separate legal action. In the settlement, the NEA agreed to release the contested $17,500. While the settlement represents a victory for NAMAC, it did not address questions of artistic merit or homophobia; rather, the NEA stressed that this decision was based on procedural matters—specifically, the seven-month delay in notifying NAMAC of the three grant rejections.

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Sheldon Hackney was confirmed by the U.S. Senate to succeed Lynne Cheney as the sixth chair of the **National Endowment for the Humanities** on August 3 ["Washington Roundup: Congress the Arts and the Endowments," April 1993]. The former University of Pennsylvania president and Clinton's first choice for the position said he planned to "extend and broaden the record of the accomplishment in all areas of the humanities."

On August 6, President Clinton announced the nomination of **Jane Alexander** to chair the **NEA**. The confirmation hearing was scheduled for September 21, with a Senate floor vote expected by the beginning of October. Currently starring in the hit Broadway play *The Sisters Rozensweig*, Alexander has been active on stage and screen for 30 years. She has been a strong advocate for regional theater and an articulate supporter of the arts. Conservative opponents are painting Alexander as part of the "Hollywood elite" and are expected to target her past political activism on nuclear disarmament. Alexander starred in anti-nuclear film *Testament* and did voice-over for the documentary *Building Bombs*, by AIVF members Mark Mori and Susan Robinson.

At press time the full Senate is also scheduled to consider the **NEA's appropriation** for FY 1994 in September. Two months earlier the House passed an appropriations bill for $166 million—five percent less than the President's request for level funding ($174 million). While the cut was ostensibly an effort to reduce the deficit, the representatives' floor debate was filled with attacks on the NEA's support of "pornographic art." The Senate will vote an a bill that splits the difference—providing $170 million, or a 2.5 percent rollback. Subsequently, the two bills will go to a Senate-House conference committee, then back to both houses of Congress for a vote this fall.

The **NEA's reauthorization** expired on September 30. The House committee marked up a bill that presents a straight two-year extension of the current language. The full House is expected to vote on this in September. While the Senate had not marked up a bill at press time, they plan to opt for a straight extension, with the expectation that a more thorough and complete review and reauthorization will occur in 1996 under a new NEA chair.

For up-to-date information on Alexander's confirmation and the NEA's appropriation and reauthorization, contact: People for the American Way (202) 467-4899.

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The Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences recently announced that director **Arthur Hiller** will succeed Robert Rehme as its 29th president.

Amy Delouise, producer/director and president of Take-Aim Productions, has been elected president of the Washington D.C. chapter of Women in Film and Video (WIFV).

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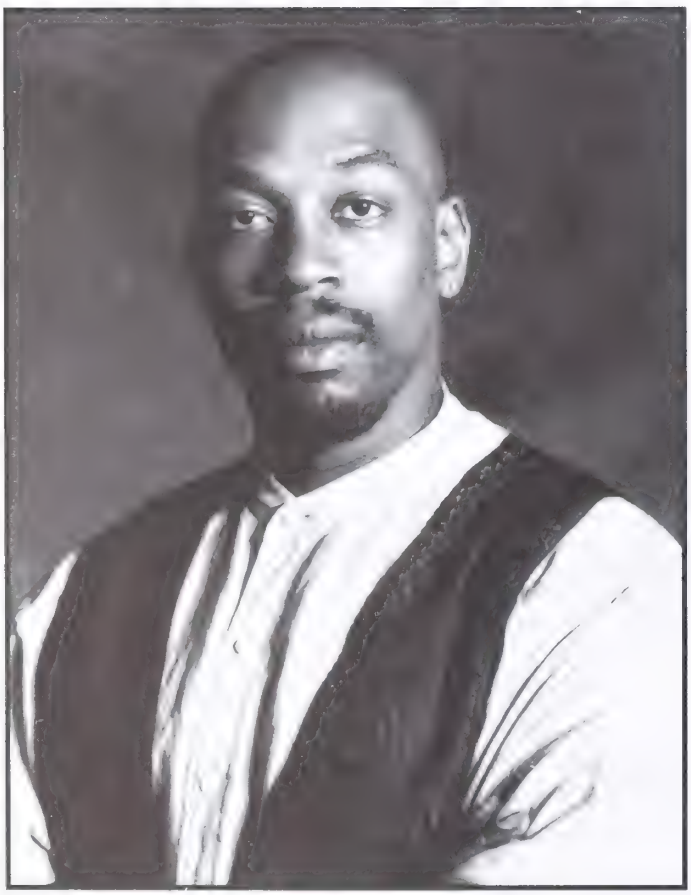
David Johnson

DIRECTOR/WRITER

The D.R.O.P. Squad

A successful black businessman (classified as a buppie) is kidnapped off a busy street and taken to an unknown location. There he is interrogated by a group of militants who call themselves the D.R.O.P. (Deprogramming and Restoration of Pride) Squad. Their objective is to reprogram buppies' minds, to disconnect them from their white American lifestyle, and return them to their African roots.

Sound like the latest Public Enemy or Onyx music video? No, it's a 45-minute short called *The Session*, made by filmmaker David Johnson in 1989. The concept is now being translated into a feature film titled *The D.R.O.P. Squad*, with Johnson making his directorial debut and Spike Lee acting as executive producer.



Courtesy filmmaker

Johnson, 31, a native of Baltimore and a graduate of Howard University, began his artistic career in theater and then moved on to television. He wrote for PBS's popular children's show *Sesame Street*, and directed PSAs, music videos, and infomercials. In 1988 he and partner Butch Robinson, who will serve as producer on the film, formed the New York-based Drop Squad Pictures. Expanding on a two-page script written by another partner, David Taylor, Johnson directed *The Session*.

The short, shown at festivals around the country, won the Paul Robeson award at the Newark Film Festival and captured favorable attention. Johnson and his partners then shopped the concept for a feature-length version to several major studios, which Johnson admits was a hair-pulling effort. "The studio executives wanted the film to be more goofy and comedic, rather than to express a message," says Johnson. "Studios only want to sell stories about dysfunctional black life. They don't understand that black audiences want to see a diversity [of stories]."

Further, most studios didn't know how they would market the film, says Johnson. Bad marketing doomed several films by black directors, such as Charles Burnett's *To Sleep with Anger* and Robert Townsend's *The Five Heartbeats*. Rather than focus on the story, studio heads spent their time discussing what type of music would be used in *The D.R.O.P. Squad*. They felt that rap music would bring in a younger audience and thought it would be a good idea to have a musician in a leading role to increase soundtrack sales. In Johnson's opinion, "There are already enough films out there for young black audiences, such as *Menace II Society* and *Poetic Justice*. I want to make films the over-30 black audience can relate to. With the exception of one or two films, my age group has been forgotten in recent black cinema."

For four years the concept for *D.R.O.P. Squad* was dragged back and forth until Spike Lee stepped in. Lee saw the original short film a few years back and thought it would make an interesting premise for a feature. After completing *Malcolm X*, Lee wanted the opportunity to serve as executive producer on a few projects. *The D.R.O.P. Squad* gives him the opportunity to remain controversial without directing, says Johnson. The film is the first joint venture of Spike Lee's 40 Acres and a Mule Filmworks and Gramercy Pictures, Universal Studio's new division that distributed Mario Van Peebles' *Posse* and Dominic Sena's *Kalifornia*. Shot this summer in Atlanta, *The D.R.O.P. Squad* will be released in early 1994.

With a $2.5 million budget, Johnson hopes to deliver a fine-tuned film that will be more complex in both character and storyline than the original short. Asked how he feels about buppies, Johnson shrugs. "It's just a label.... I don't want the character to be seen as wrong because he makes a lot of money and has material things," he says. "Rather, he's wrong because he is turning his back on his identity and heritage.

"A diversity in black cinema is incredibly important at this point," Johnson continues. "There are so many stories about black life that can be told. I would like to make a film centering around each genre—comedy, drama, science fiction, and so on."

Johnson wants not only to be a part of the game, but also to be in control of how it is played. He feels that the minority filmmakers in the spotlight should join together to form their own studio, similar to the way United Artists was formed in 1919 by actors Charlie Chaplin, Mary Pickford, Douglas Fairbanks, and D.W. Griffith. Otherwise, Johnson fears, films by black directors may fade away, just like they did in the seventies. Says Johnson, "If you own the medium, you can control the message."

JOHNNY MCNAIR

Johnny McNair is a screenwriter who has just optioned his first script, The Storm, *which will go into production this fall.*



Courtesy First Run Features

Monika Treut

DOCUMENTARIAN

Female Misbehavior

Caught for a moment during production on her piece for the international omnibus film *Erotique*, German filmmaker Monika Treut contemplates sexual liberation, feminism, and the infamous Professor Camille Paglia. Treut has always been obsessed with the underbelly of lesbian, feminist, transsexual, and generally countercultural lives in the United States. Appropriately, her recently completed quartet of shorts, *Female Misbehavior*, includes portraits of four "bad girls" bundled into an eclectic and entertaining feature. The intrigue and content of these pieces, produced over the last 10 years, overlap with that in her three features: *Seduction: The Cruel Woman* (1985), *Virgin Machine* (1988), and *My Father Is Coming* (1991). The concentration, patience, and focus demonstrated in *Female Misbehavior*, however, is new.

The crowning glory of *Female Misbehavior* is a 22-minute tirade called *Dr. Paglia* (1992), starring the author of the controversial bestseller *Sexual Personae: Art and Decadence from Nefertiti to Emily Dickinson* (1990). Treut says, "[Camille Paglia] became this media person when her book came out, but she was a nobody when I met her. I thought she would be good on film because she talked constantly." Ostensibly being interviewed by Bruce Benderson (cowriter on *My Father Is Coming*), Paglia doesn't stop raving against "stupid, provincial feminists" and "naive, ignorant lesbians" long enough to let him utter a word. Paglia, abhorred by many feminsts for her neo-conservative positions, nonetheless evades simple classification because of her pro-prostitution, pro-pornography, and pro-choice views.

Treut shot for five hours, during which time Paglia mused about everything from Ancient Egyptian art to her own childhood. In the final cut, the filmmaker interrupts Paglia's flow rarely, intercutting short archival footage of a woman throwing knives at a four-year-old and a rifle-toting, old woman shooting light bulbs from the hands of little girls. "That's Camille to me," chuckles Treut. "I can't do more than present her as a person and have my funny comments. I want to let her be as obnoxious as she wants to be and also let her make her points. I want to let people decide what they think."

Treut's moral ethic is truly sympathetic. "When I do a portrait, I don't want to trash the person, because I feel that's dishonest," she says. "I'm a small independent filmmaker, and they're giving me their time and I don't give them money." Besides, she offers, "I agree with Paglia's criticism of feminists who cannot appreciate art. That's a big lack in the social movement. This is what I was experiencing making films. Lots of people aren't interested in film aesthetics and so on." It would be hard, however, not to take issue with Paglia elsewhere. "Of course, I disagree with her when she says feminism has not changed the world at all," Treut attests. "I don't quite believe that because, at the very least, feminism has changed women and their living conditions. One generation before ours, women couldn't do anything."

For Treut, Paglia exemplifies a new possibility for women. "I find her ego fascinating, something which is forbidden to women. If she were a man, no one would be offended by the way she talks or

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behaves. A lot of male writers, artists, and academics, like Norman Mailer, behave in a really weird way. Here's a woman misbehaving in public. Women are trained to be dialogue people, and she's a monologue person. She doesn't need anybody. People would say that's a male pattern." In the film, when Paglia isn't dissing feminists, she's talking about herself. "I'm a carnivorous, solitary, self-ruling animal. I want to mate, and then I want to kill," she says without pause.

When Treut began the series back in 1983, she was responding to the trap of little grants by making little movies. Although the three other subjects showcased in *Female Misbehavior* couldn't be more different from Paglia, they all share a performer's ease and drama. The final compilation presents a decade of lesbian feminist taboo subjects, or as Treut would say, "10 years of female misbehaving." The first film was *Bondage* (1983), featuring Carol Macho, a New York lesbian masochist. In *Annie* (1989), the glorious Annie Sprinkle transforms herself from a dour housewife into a sex goddess with dancing breasts. The final section of the 80-minute package is *Max* (1992), about a transsexual—a former lesbian turned straight boy. "They're all courageous women, pioneers," says Treut, "especially Annie, who plays with her porn experience to get strength back, to get pleasure from her own body."

The package is being distributed by First Run Features and is showing in Berlin and Hamburg as well as at art houses around the U.S. Treut looks forward to reaching a slightly different crowd than usual. "For example, people who normally just read books will turn up to see *Dr. Paglia*," hopes Treut. They'll catch this whole mixture of distinctly extraordinary women and can decide for themselves if, as Treut believes, "with a strong movement of sexual minorities in the nineties, everything is possible."

CATHERINE SAALFIELD

Catherine Saalfield is a contributing editor for The Independent.

Arthur Dong

DOCUMENTARIAN

Coming Out Under Fire

Don't even think of congratulating Arthur Dong on how great his timing is. While it may look like he's riding this year's hot issue with *Coming Out Under Fire*, his upcoming documentary about gays in the military during World War II, Dong barely got the time of day from funders when he began the project three years ago.

One prestigious foundation after another turned down the filmmaker despite a track record that

includes *Sewing Woman*, the Oscar-nominated short profile of his mother's struggle to survive and raise a family in China and then in the United States, and *Forbidden City, U.S.A.*, his poignant, revealing study of the Chinese American entertainers who broke through to mainstream (read white) audiences at a chic San Francisco nightclub in the 1940s. Over and over, Dong's proposal for *Coming Out Under Fire* was greeted with the same skeptical question: "Why would anyone want to be in the military and fight for the right to kill?"

Such response is indicative of the failure to remember both the moral unambiguity of World War II and the acute disappointment of anyone (whether underage, 4-F, or homosexual) who was denied participation in the nationwide war effort. But Dong accepts that his application simply didn't emphasize sufficiently the civil liberties implications of the military's persecution of gays. "We know now that the Federal employment policies adopted in the fifties regarding gays were inspired by the military policies of the forties," he explains.

Another hurdle Dong faced was the oft-repeated perception that AIDS-related projects, because they dealt with life and death, were more important than his "historical film." The filmmaker takes a broader perspective, however. "I think the fight for AIDS funding is a fight for civil liberties and right to access, not just a health care issue," he asserts.

The Edelman Family Fund anted up some seed money via the now-defunct Foundation for Independent Video and Film Donor-Advised Fund, but Dong continued to collect rejection letters from the well-heeled foundations. Dong readily concedes that he was ready to call it quits as an independent filmmaker and take a job as a segment producer on one of the ubiquitous *Hard Copy* or *Cops*-style shows. Without blinking an eye? "Of course I blinked an eye," exclaims the feisty Dong, who has lived in Los Angeles since 1984. "But when you have to feed yourself and your cats and dogs, reality speaks." Instead, in the summer of 1991 he signed up for an American Film Institute workshop on the nonfiction television industry.

Fortunately, one of the contacts Dong made in the workshop was at Los Angeles pubcaster KCET. He signed on as a producer, and turned out 10 half-hour documentaries within a year. Despite the grueling pace of producing a film from start to finish in five weeks, Dong relished the rapid-fire decision-making required to get the job done. "You don't get that when you fundraise for three years and then get two years to make the film," Dong says. "There's lots of sitting around and mulling it over."

When the National Endowment for the Arts and the Independent Television Service finally came through with grants for *Coming Out Under Fire*, Dong left KCET and burned ahead with his film. Based on Allan Berube's book *Coming Out Under Fire: The History of Gay Men and Women in World War II*, Dong conducted interviews with



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15 men and women, including vets, military officers, and psychiatrists. Dong makes no argument—with any of his films—that his subjects' stories reflect anything other than their own experiences.

"The audience is hungry for the filmmaker to say, 'Yes, this is what it was like for everybody,' but you can't say that. Some people criticized *Sewing Woman* because their mother's story was different. I told them, 'This isn't a film about your mother. Make your own film about your mother.' I'm a very audience-friendly filmmaker, but there comes a time when you can't hold their hand and lead them through the process."

Nonetheless, Dong intends the specific stories in *Coming Out Under Fire* to illuminate the sociological landscape in the United States at a particular point in time—in much the same way as did those of the Chinese American singers and dancers in *Forbidden City, U.S.A.*

"This is a film about 15 people's lives—and a chapter of history. The real challenge is to say, 'We're talking about individuals, but we're really talking about a whole community.' A lot of veterans appealed their less-than-honorable discharges, and veterans' groups organized, making this—as far as we know—the first specific cause of the gay and lesbian community."

At the same time, Dong is working with coproducer Rusty Frank on *Tap! The Tempo of America*, a cultural and social history of tap dancing (featuring the last interview with the late Ruby Keeler) that centers on the 1930s. Of course, none of Dong's docs are, strictly speaking, historical films; in looking through the lens of the past, the filmmaker illuminates contemporary concerns in a multicultural society, from job discrimination to racial stereotypes. In particular, *Coming Out Under Fire* has a powerful resonance given the ongoing negotiations between President Clinton and the military over the role of gays and lesbians. So with the verbal equivalent of a shrug, Dong allows that yes, maybe he's in the right place at the right time. "None of this was relevant in 1990 beyond a small portion of the gay and lesbian population," reminds Dong. "Now, all of a sudden, it's a rallying point."

MICHAEL FOX

Michael Fox is a columnist and film critic for SF Weekly *and freelances for numerous Bay Area publications.*

Lorie Loeb

A N I M A T O R

Rewind: It Could Have Been Me

In her new animated film, *Rewind: It Could Have Been Me*, New York University Tisch School of the Arts assistant professor Lorie Loeb powerfully combines the universal appeal of animation with the careful research of a social documentarian. *Rewind* is the story of Diane, a homeless woman. She is first depicted on the street, dishevelled and cursing at passersby. The animation then proceeds in reverse chronological order through the turning points of her life, concluding at her last job. The heart-rending combination of circumstances that forces Diane to lose her job, her home, and her child are typical of what happens to women who find themselves on the streets of America.

An accomplished filmmaker, Loeb has used animation for a variety of purposes. Her credits include experimental work (*Flight Over Stone: Ode to Opus 40)*, documentary, and both com-



Courtesy filmmaker



puter-aided and traditional animated forms. Loeb has also worked with animator Jane Aaron on Aaron's *Set in Motion, Traveling Light*, and *Remains To Be Seen.*

The impetus for *Rewind*, Loeb explains, was that "I was frustrated by the art trend in animation that was coupled with a lack of social consciousness. I wanted to give something back to life beyond art for art's sake. I was interested in several issues; homelessness was one of them." Loeb's husband, Tom Roberts, is a homeless advocate attorney and served as an inspiration for the film (as well as one of its scriptwriters). "Tom suggested that I show the progressive events in the life of a homeless person in reverse order. I thought it was a brilliant idea, and I went for it."

One challenge Loeb faced was overcoming the disorientation of reverse time. She videotaped actors going through Diane's motions. This material subsequently helped ground the 8,000 charcoal drawings necessary for the 13-minute animation.

Dedicated to the principle that the film must be "real" as she could make it, Loeb also worked hard researching the causes and circumstances of homelessness. She looked at both sides of the social service system, speaking with advocates for the homeless and with various agents of the state whose job it is to manage the "homeless problem." She also turned to Elliott Liebow's compelling book, *Tell Them Who I Am*, which gives detailed accounts collected from women in shelters and on the street.

Loeb used actress Marcia Gay Harden, currently on Broadway as Harper in *Angels in America*, to give passionate voice to Diane, who tells her story to her young child. Holly Near rewrote and recorded the song "It Could Have Been Me" especially for the film.

Rewind is more about compassion than pedagogy on the root causes of homelessness. Loeb's intent was to humanize homeless people. "As long as homeless people are seen as 'the other,' it

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is easy to feel disdain rather than connection and responsibility," she notes. "The issues regarding homelessness and its particular impact upon women deserve more thorough investigation and action. Until women on the street are seen as more than an annoyance or an embarrassment, little will be done to alleviate the problems these women face or the string of problems that lead to homelessness."

Loeb is currently seeking a 30- to 60-minute companion piece on homeless women that can be bundled with *Rewind* into a useful educational package. She plans to make her film available at cost to advocacy groups, some of which served as research sources, including the National Coalition for the Homeless, the Western Coalition for the Homeless, and the Homeless Advocacy Project of the Bar Association of San Francisco.

LYNNE BACHLEDA

Lynne Bachleda is a freelance writer and researcher in Nashville.


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James Yee

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Independent Television Service

"I'll be a walking, moving target, but what's new?" With these plucky words, Jim Yee prepared to leave his long-time director's post at the San Francisco-based National Asian American Telecommunications Association (NAATA) to pick up the reins as executive director of the Independent Television Service (ITVS) in St. Paul. In September, Yee took over from John Schott, who has led the often beleaguered service since 1990.

Yee was responding to the suggestion that he was putting himself into a very hot seat as ITVS moves from its inaugural funding initiatives to the thorny task of getting its programs on the air. If Yee's answer sounds a bit cavalier, he's earned the right. A self-described "classic sixties dropping-in, dropping out kind of person," Yee in fact has a substantial history of community activism and is a veteran of the public television wars of the past decade. And he brings an in-the-grain multiculturalism to his new post.

The second-generation offspring of immigrants, Yee spent, in his own words, his "rice years" in New York City's Chinatown and his "Wonder Bread years" in the Bronx. He is also an offspring of the civil rights and anti-war movements. A former VISTA volunteer and alternative school teacher, it was a super 8 project in an "open school" in Vermont that initiated him into the world of independent media. That ultimately led, after stints in political campaigns, urban studies at MIT, and filmmaking at WGBH in Boston, to



Photo: Gerald Gustafson, courtesy ITVS

NAATA, an organization he headed for 12 years. NAATA is one of the most successful of the five minority consortia funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB) to bring minority programming to the public airwaves.

Yee was part of the broad national coalition of independent producers who struggled long and hard to convince Congress to direct a recalcitrant CPB to provide funding for ITVS, whose mandate is to bring diversity and innovation to U.S. public television audiences via independent production.

From the start ITVS has had to tack against contrary winds. CPB, playing reluctant parent, delayed ITVS money over contractual and organizational issues. Public television's more rabid right-wing critics immediately jumped on the service for alleged bias it hadn't even had a chance to demonstrate. And many independents, even some who received funding, have criticized ITVS over its funding strategies, contract terms, and its very idea of "innovation."

Yee, for one, gives ITVS under Schott tremendous credit for doing the "almost impossible" job of starting up the organization amid such hostility. He does feel ITVS needs to better communicate what it is doing and especially wants to shorten the turnaround time in its dealings with independents. But Yee isn't about to play, or let ITVS play, the Atlas on whose shoulders the television dreams of independents rest. While he strongly believes in the "importance and value of pushing the envelope of television," Yee is quick to point out that the pressure is as much on independents themselves as on ITVS. "It's not only a question of 'Are independents being given the opportunity?,' but 'Do they have the ability, the courage, the creative insight to come in with the kind or programming that tests our intellectual edge and that will also get seen?' You know, the biggest enemy is the remote control."

Yee knows that getting programs on the air is the organization's next big challenge; PBS is under no obligation to run ITVS programs. To date, about 15 shows have been aired or accepted by individual stations and state networks, in many cases via the regional ptv distributors. These include works by Ellen Spiro, Victor Masayesva, Christine Chang, Suzie Baer, Kathe Sandler. Some projects have been picked up by *New Television* (Barbara Abrash and Ester Katz's *Margaret Sanger*) and *P.O.V.* (David Collins and Betsy Thompson's *For Better or For Worse*). The first of ITVS's series, *TV Families* and *Declarations*, will be ready for presentation to PBS brass by October.

"The rhetoric that created ITVS now needs to be in the form of programming," says Yee. The community activist in him comes to the fore: "We need to be creative. We need to go not just to the system, but also to the communities and audiences. I don't think we should depend on the wisdom of the gatekeepers." Still, he admits, "there are no magic bullets on this one." Yee's experience at NAATA, which has a strong record of getting programs on their air, should hold him in good stead.

Yee brings at least two personal strategies for success to ITVS. One comes from his years at NAATA, and that is to "have a long vision, stick to your plans, and not be diverted by momentary crises." The second comes from a deeper well of commitment, the sense of public service that is the thread in what he calls his "tattered and checkerboard" career: "I believe we have no choice but to work at being optimistic and also to take great chances. I refuse to be beaten down... To me crisis is always a window of opportunity."

ROBERT ANBIAN

*Robert Anbian is a poet (*Antinostalgia*) and the editor of* Release Print, *the monthly magazine of San Francisco's Film Arts Foundation.*



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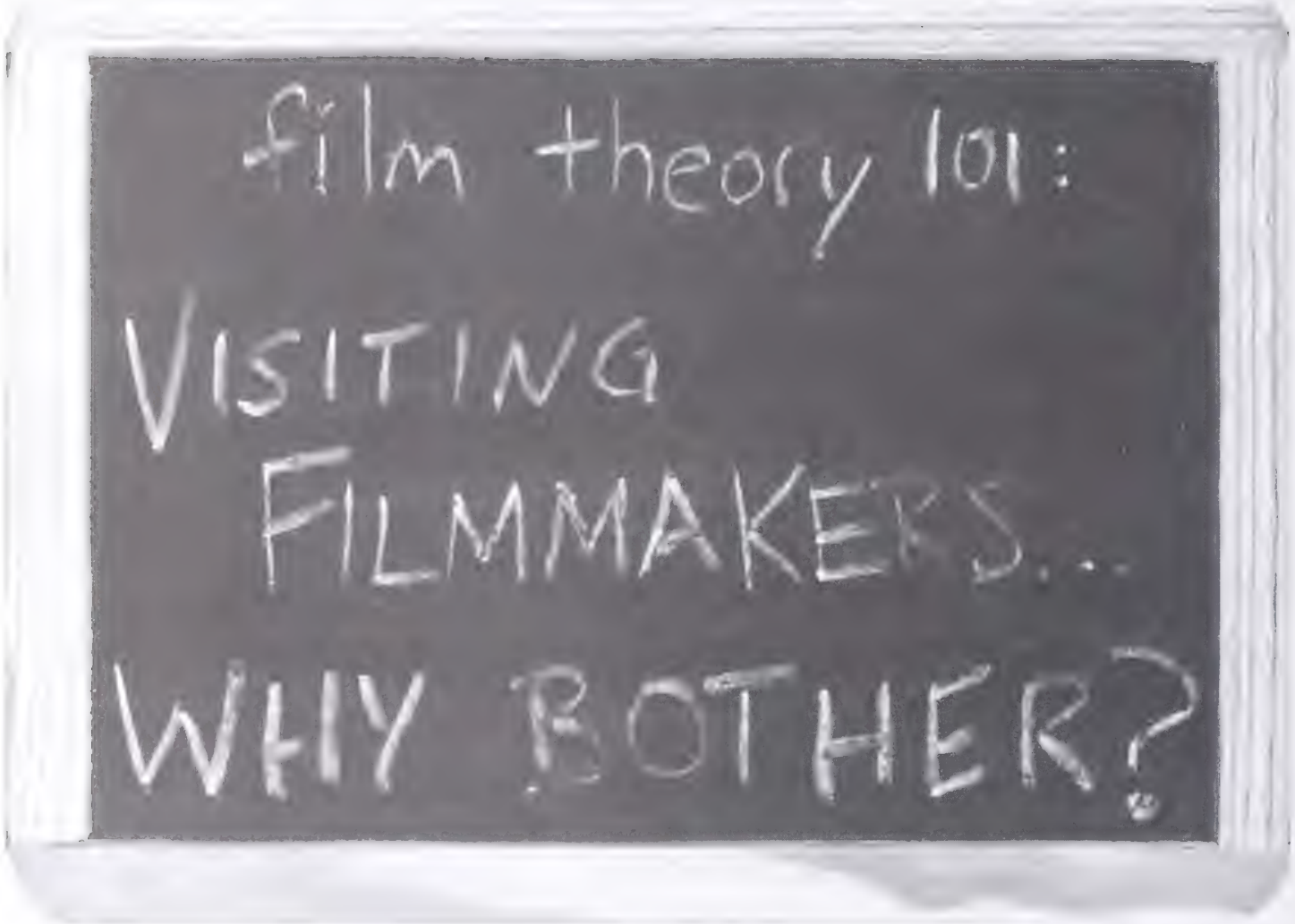
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SCOTT MACDONALD

Excuse a personal confession. Sometime during the early 1970s, when I was in my first years of teaching film studies and American literature at Utica College, the then assistant dean suggested I consider arranging to bring some filmmakers to campus. Looking back, it seems a sensible suggestion—film was a popular new field at the college and, no doubt, the assistant dean assumed that visiting filmmakers would be exciting and intellectually invigorating for our students. But I was resistant. Fresh out of graduate school, I had what I thought was a sensible, even sophisticated answer: "I'm interested in films, not filmmakers," I said. "My students need to engage the texts themselves, and having filmmakers visit in person would distract their attention; I'm trying to wean them away from their fixation on stars and glamour and onto the construction of effect and meaning. Inviting filmmakers here and making a to-do about them would suggest that filmmakers' assumptions about their work are somehow privileged—the Final Word—and that would undermine the students' chances of thinking seriously for themselves about cinema." (If this isn't precisely what I said, it's what I meant.) At the time, I felt pretty satisfied with my response, but I also knew that it was a smokescreen. Actually, the assistant dean's suggestion had frightened me. What I had really felt was that filmmakers, being creative people, would see right through me and into the embarrassing conventionality of my life. It seemed to me then that filmmakers were representatives of the passionate Real World I'd spent six years reading about as a graduate student in American literature. To make films, they had to be as fundamentally centered and self-assured as I was insecure in my academic niche; this was my first real teaching job, and I was dealing with large numbers of students for the first time and with the pressure to achieve tenure. And anyway, why would a filmmaker want to visit our little campus (even if I could afford to invite one)?

Obviously, I recognize the immaturity and romanticism of my original assumptions about filmmakers. As I became interested in independent filmmaking and realized that several accomplished filmmakers lived in this region (Hollis Frampton, Larry Gottheim, Robert Huot, J.J. Murphy), it began to seem natural to invite them to present work. Over the past 20 years, I've hosted dozens of independent filmmakers, and it's become clear to me that our lives are not so different. It's also clear that the assistant dean's suggestion was correct: these visitors have added immeasurably to my experiences as a teacher, to my overall cinematic awareness, and to the cultural energy of the college. In fact, the process of hosting filmmakers has come to seem one of the essentials of my job—an obligation to my field as well as to my students, the college, and the local community. This feeling of obligation is predicated on some reasoning I want to share here, and it is cognizant of some of the easily overestimated difficulties in making regular filmmaker visits a practicality, especially during a recession.

Why Host Independent Filmmakers?

I have never hosted a big-money Hollywood director and remain uninterested in doing so, pretty much for the reasons I originally gave the assistant dean for not inviting filmmakers in general. My sense of the market is that the big names tend to charge thousands of dollars for an appearance, an

I have long been troubled by the academic tendency to privilege writings about cinema over cinema itself.

amount too large to justify at a small college or even at many large universities during a period of economic cutbacks. And, even if I had access to the money necessary to bring a high profile director to campus, I would generally resist this option in favor of redirecting the resources toward lesser known independents.

My determination to include independent films of a variety of kinds in my courses, and to focus my public programming on independent films and filmmakers (and, more recently, video and videomakers), is a function of the pedagogical goal of helping my students understand that cinema is a broader, more various field than they realize, and that the assumptions embedded in popular movies (and TV) are not only problematic, but for much of film history have been critiqued by the various ongoing traditions of independent cinema: avant-garde films, low budget features, documentaries. Many of the films/filmmakers I've found most valuable are generally considered "avant-garde" or "experimental" (or whatever term we're using this year for this huge and diverse body of work). If I show Stan Brakhage's *The Act of Seeing with One's Own Eyes* (1972) in Horror Film, or Hollis Frampton's *Poetic Justice* (1971) in Film and Literature; or if I invite Martin Arnold to my public film series to present and discuss his optical printer explorations of moments from commercial films (*Pièce Touchée*, 1991; *Passage à l'acte*, 1993) or Yvonne Rainer to present and discuss *Privilege* (1982), her film on menopause and racism, I can be sure that classroom and non-classroom audiences alike will be face-to-face with filmmaking procedures and products—and filmmaker personalities—very different from those they're likely to discover in their pop culture surround. And further, I can be sure that our discussions will make clear that, for at least some filmmakers, passionate commitment to progressive ideology and its embodiment in alternate film practice is more important than the financial bottom line.

Particular filmmakers relate to their work and to audiences in particular ways—and thus have various lessons to impart. To see John Porter confound conventional assumptions about the "limitations" of super 8mm filmmaking by performing simple but stunning visual/conceptual miracles with his super 8 projector (in the various versions of *Scanning*), miracles impossible for a 35mm film; to experience the thrilling intensity of Ken Jacobs' *Two Wrenching Departures*, his performance with his Nervous System (a Zoopraxiscope-like device that allows him to conduct precise, frame-by-frame explorations of 16mm imagery) in homage to the late Jack Smith and Bob Fleischer; to see Carolee Schneemann make love with James Tenney in *Fuses* (1967), and then watch her take direct responsibility for her erotic imagery by discussing it with audiences; to listen to Bill Greaves explain the philosophical and sociological underpinnings of the wildly experimental, recently rediscovered *Symbiopsychotaxiplasm: Take One* (1967) and its relationship to his career as a chronicler of African American history; to watch Christine Choy confront the overt and covert forms of racism that resulted in the brutal death she explores in *Who Killed Vincent Chin?* (1988) with an audience that considers itself "above" racism; to see that the mood of George Kuchar's bizarre films and videos is an accurate reflection of his complex, endearing personality; to watch Marlon Riggs or Barbara Hammer discuss their openly gay videos and films with audiences unaccustomed to mature, public interchange about homosexuality and lesbianism—such experiences add tremendously to the vitality of film courses and film series, both immediately and in the long term. In many instances, the students in my classes and the individuals who attend the film series I program continue to struggle with and learn from these film events—at least, so they tell me—for years. Simply put, many are never again quite the same filmgoers; their experiences with alternative film- and videomakers dramatically recontextualize their conventional filmgoing in ways that screenings alone rarely do.

A second way in which my commitment to independent cinema is a challenge to the conventional involves economics. By renting independent films and hosting filmmakers, I redirect the limited resources I do control away from the conventional cinema toward the other traditions, which are usually in dire need of financial support. Of course, one can rent a commercial film for a class, show it, and critique it during lecture or discussion, or by making available perceptive written analyses. But this approach requires one to confirm the power of the conventional, to reveal its problematic dimensions. As often as is feasible, I use a different tactic: I financially support alternative filmmaking practices and products that can function as critiques of the conventional. To commercial distributors, the rental fees academics pay for presenting pop films mean little; but in the world of avant-garde and documentary films, a few hundred dollars goes a comparatively long way. To put it crudely, independent films and filmmakers are a better buy, one that directly helps maintain the energy and viability



Yvonne Rainer and students discussing *Privilege*, her experimental film about menopause and racism.

Photo: Vivian Selbo, courtesy Whitney Independent Study Program



Discussions with independent filmmakers such as George Kuchar (left) and John Porter add a new dimension to film studies classes. They also show students that passionate commitment to progressive ideology and its embodiment in alternative film practice is more important than the financial bottom line.

Photo of John Porter: Edie Steiner; photo of George Kuchar, courtesy filmmaker

of remarkable alternative cinematic histories and the cine-critique they provide.

There is one final justification for bothering to host filmmakers. I have long been troubled by the academic tendency to privilege writings about cinema over cinema itself, a tendency evident in a wide variety of ways (for example, in the habit of many film journals to provide detailed citations of all articles and books about films discussed in articles, but no indication of where the films themselves can be rented). Further, I've been told any number of times by fellow academics that filmmakers are no more important than other cultural commentators, that it's no more logical to support the producer/director of a cinematic text than to support someone who writes an intelligent literary text about film. And, of course, I agree: at least on one level all texts are equal. A written essay, a short story, a narrative film, a documentary...all are systems of signs deployed to be read. Therefore, to honor filmmakers in particular—by inviting them to be present "in person" at screenings of their films—is nothing but an academic version of asking stars for their autographs.

And yet, since we are also talking about economic survival—about work—it is well to remember that there is at least one practical distinction between literary and cinematic creativity. To write a literary text, little more is required than pencil and paper, or access to a word processor. One can write a first-rate theoretical essay, a review, a poem, with little or no capital outlay. But one would be hard-pressed to make a first-rate film without some substantial financial investment in film stock and processing, at the very least. Further, if one writes an essay or a poem that is never published, one is out nothing but time, but filmmakers must invest the capital necessary for production with no assurance that this investment will ever pay off.

Frankly, I admire the gamble of filmmaking, and I especially admire those independent filmmakers who are willing to make this gamble on behalf of films that defy popular cinematic conventions. Indeed, the very willingness to make these gambles over and over on film after film is a measure of a film artist's commitment to go beyond the conventional, to defy what is practical, in the interest of accessing something of the spirit. For nearly 20 years, filmmakers' willingness to gamble has enriched my personal life and my teaching immeasurably. How better to express my gratitude than by regularly using the films and, as often as possible, hosting their makers?

"I Don't Have a Budget"

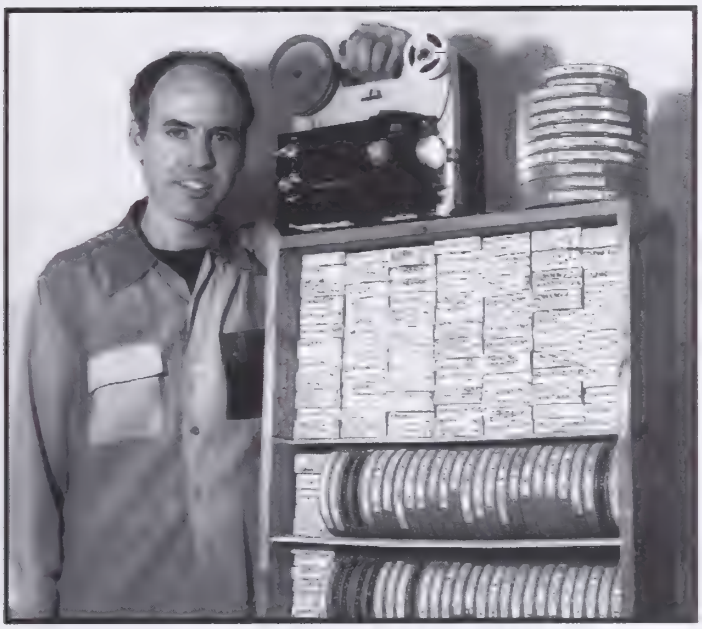
It always amazes me to hear other academics explain that, while they agree that inviting filmmakers is a good idea, they don't have the financial resources necessary. It's an explanation I've heard over and over, most recently from a professor at a major university who loves the independent cinema and has written intelligently about it. He explained, "I rarely invite filmmakers, unless someone else has brought them to town—then, if I'm teaching a relevant course, I try to find $50 and invite them to visit my class." Of course, if one is teaching and advising a full academic load, and meeting with college committees, *and* trying to maintain one's scholarship, writing, and publication in whatever spare time is left, searching for funds—never a pleasant prospect in any case and, for academics perhaps, an especially onerous task (some of us were attracted to academe by the fantasy that teaching would free us from having to think about money)—seems simply another burden. Since hosting visiting filmmakers is not required by most educational institutions, unlike all these other time-consuming responsibilities, most potential hosts put their energies elsewhere.

But, of course, reticence about making the effort to find the necessary funds is one thing, the availability of funding is quite another. My guess is that at most academic institutions, moneys that could be used for filmmaker fees are available: all that is necessary is a willingness to access these funds. In fact, my experience has been that one does not need to instigate a new procedure for each prospective filmmaker guest. Once visiting filmmakers have become an ongoing part of the life of an institution, the necessary funds tend to remain accessible.

Lest the reader assume I'm fantasizing, I should describe my particular financial resources. I am a full-time professor of American literature and film studies at Utica College, an independent branch of Syracuse University located in Utica, New York. Utica College is a tuition-driven college with 1,600 full-time students. Nominally a liberal arts college, our most popular majors are accounting, criminal justice, occupational therapy, and public relations/journalism. I offer two film studies courses each semester and program a weekly film series attended by students and other local residents. My financial resources for film are as follows: $4,000 a year for general classroom rentals; $2,100 from Utica College's Student Activities office for the film series, and another $1,500 from the same office for African American film events (our student body is 20 percent African American and Hispanic, and I offer a See the Right Thing film series once a year); and, since my series is open and easily accessible to the general public, I receive $3,500 from the New York State Council on the Arts (this amount is down by 60 percent from earlier years, as a result of across-the-board state cuts). In addition, I have access to funding for special events. I am also an adjunct professor of film at Hamilton College, a small, well-endowed liberal arts college in Clinton, New York, with 1,600 full-time students. My classroom budget for the one course I teach at Hamilton is $3,000, and in addition, I have access to $600 from the Department of Fine Arts for hosting filmmakers, as well as to various moneys available from campus committees for special events.

Judging from what I've been told by colleagues at other colleges and universities, the amounts I've listed may seem extravagant, and while it's true that my longevity at both institutions has allowed me to develop the resources I need, it is also true that developing and maintaining these resources has never been a particularly painful process.

Finding funds for films and filmmakers requires that one think on several different levels. Basic funding for classroom rentals must be arrived at via negotiations between teacher, academic department, and administration.



Students' experiences with alternative film- and videomakers dramatically recontextualize their conventional filmgoing in ways that screenings alone rarely do.

Developing a series of visits by filmmakers is an educational opportunity in itself. It requires networking within one's institution and, when possible, with other institutions in the same geographic area. The culture-wide romance with Hollywood and the movies, and the somewhat more academically focused romance with the art world, tend to render even an independent filmmaker's "in person" appearance something of an event. Consequently, filmmaker visits can provide a nexus where many academic interests can intersect. To assume that a visit by Yvonne Rainer need be hosted exclusively by a film department is to waste an opportunity. Most academic institutions today have Women's Studies courses, as well as a variety of organizations formed to support women's development on campus. Often a bit of networking can provide multiple sources of funding as well as a larger, more diverse audience for an event. Indeed, in an era when many colleges and universities are exploring ways to create multidisciplinary awareness in students, such events can find funding from administrative offices.

My experience has been that most of my colleagues in other fields are only marginally aware of the many ways in which independent films/filmmakers can invigorate their disciplines. Recently, I had the good fortune to attend a National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute that studied the Hudson River Valley in 19th Century painting and literature, and discovered that my colleagues—academics in the field of American studies, cultural geography, art history—had no awareness that there is a substantial body of independent film in which landscape is dealt with in ways reminiscent of, and sometimes indebted to, Hudson River School painting: I'm thinking, for example, of early Larry Gottheim films such as *Fog Line* (1971) and *Horizons* (1973), and J.J. Murphy's *Sky Blue Water Light Sign* (1974). Indeed, when I instigated a visit by Peter Hutton to show his *Landscape* (1987) and *In Titan's Goblet* (1991), not only were my colleagues impressed with the films, several began making plans to host Hutton during the coming year.

Some filmmakers offer more obvious possibilities for networking than others. Academe's current wrestle with the issue of ethnicity and the general pressure on administrations and faculties to create opportunities for interethnic cooperation provide a particularly fertile ground for cross-disciplinary collaboration—whether one wants to host filmmakers who represent particular ethnic contributions or a filmmaker like Alan Berliner, whose recent *Intimate Stranger* (1991) questions the very nature of ethnic identity. The same is true for the issue of sexual orientation. But the possibilities for interdisciplinary collaboration on film events are nearly endless—all that's necessary is a bit of imagination. If I invite Su Friedrich to show *Sink or Swim* (1987), her film about her troubled relationship with her father, it's logical to contact not only colleagues who teach film, video, art, and women's studies, and those interested in gay and lesbian issues, but those who teach the psychology of childhood development or explore the effects of divorce, and those who teach literature (since Friedrich's work has consistently made ingenious use of visual and spoken text). I can think of few academic disciplines that cannot profit from independent cinema and visiting filmmakers.

The costs of hosting filmmakers can also be made more manageable through collaboration with colleagues at other institutions. Indeed, in some regions of the country interorganizational collaboration has become formalized. The Central New York Programmers Group, made up of academic and public programmers from institutions from Cooperstown in central New York to Buffalo, meets twice a year to collaborate on hosting filmmakers whose travel expenses would be prohibitive for any small, noncommercial exhibitor. Bringing filmmakers to a series of gigs during a two-to-three week period, we have been able to offer upstate residents opportunities to meet filmmakers from Europe and the Far East, as well as from the West Coast. Becoming part of such a network, or developing a new network, can be both a pleasure and a magnet for funding from state or local art funders who see such networking as a productive avenue for improving regional cultural opportunities. For information about the CNYPG's activities, contact: Graham Leggat, 103 E. York St., Ithaca, NY 14850; (607) 277-5443.

How Much Are Independents Worth?

The standard fee at screening rooms that specialize in independent filmmaking is often modest. Normally, the San Francisco Cinematheque pays $250; Millennium in New York pays $200 (until the recent State cutbacks, it had been $250). No rentals are paid for the film screened: filmmakers are expected to provide the films. These low fees, necessitated by the difficulty of keeping doors open from year to year, have, unfortunately, tended to set the tone for academic fees as well, despite academe's generally more substantial resources.

While some filmmaker hosts make it their business to pay reasonably well, stories I've heard over the years from filmmakers and programmers alike suggest that a lack of empathy, or at least awareness, is not uncommon among academics. Often, the assumption is that "$200 is a lot of money for an hour's work" (assuming that a filmmaker's introduction and question-and-answer session take an hour). This *sounds* sensible, but for those filmmakers who do not have regular teaching jobs, who do their best to make a living from their filmmaking and various odd jobs, it can seem quite unreasonable.

An independent filmmaker who had the unheard-of good fortune to be

Continued on page 55

"We Don't, Well, We Might... Okay, We'll Fund Media."



KAREN HIRSCH

We went looking for production money, but found none. Independent filmmaker A.C. Warden and I, as video department manager for Greenpeace, wanted to create a video about toxic pollution in the Mississippi River. With a pile of foundation rejection letters growing higher by the day, our spirits were sinking. To reinvigorate our money-quest and cheer ourselves up, we held a fundraising reception. Like any event featuring free food and drink within walking distance of the Capitol, hungry Hill staff outnumbered potential funders by a margin of at least 20 to one. We presented the sample tape for *We All Live Downstream* and dutifully handed out pledge cards that began to pile up unmarked as the crowd headed home.

At the end of the evening, Larry Kressley of the Public Welfare Foundation approached Warden and said, "You can count on us for $10,000 for distribution." Warden almost fell on the floor. "That was the first time that ever happened to me," she recalls. "I had dreamed of that moment." After 13 years of fundraising for independent productions, the self proclaimed "queen of in-kind" had never before received that level of foundation support.

Why was Kressley so willing to open Public Welfare's checkbook? "The documentary represented a cross-section of the kind of people that get involved in the grassroots environmental organizations our foundation supports, including small businessmen, working people, people of color," he explains. "We saw the video as a useful tool that, with the community action guide, could be used for years on an ongoing basis by those groups." And why fund only distribution and not production? "That was a way of dealing with strong resistance on the part of our board, which didn't want to fund any media at all," Kressley replies. "Our foundation is committed to ongoing work in communities. The idea of showing something on PBS one night, even if it gets noticed on the front page of the *New York Times* the next day, doesn't translate into lasting social change. With *We All Live Downstream*, I think we played an important role in getting that video to the broadest audience possible and targeting it to the constituency of the foundation."

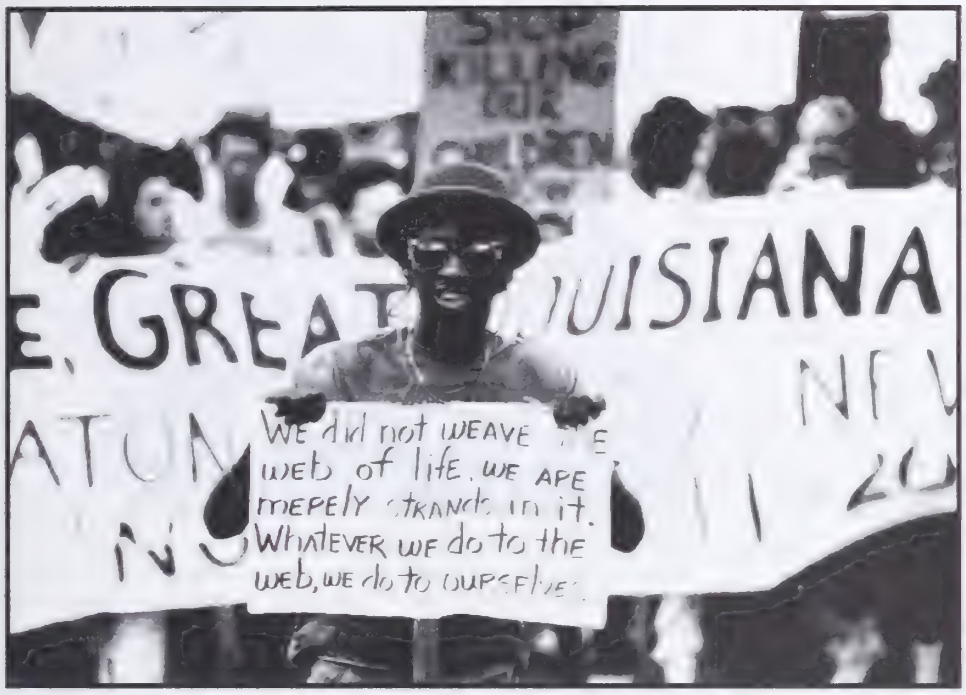
"To reach our constituency," "to further our program goals"—foundation grantmakers repeat these phrases like a mantra when they talk about film and video. Only a tiny handful of foundations fund media for media's sake. The vast majority fund only film and video projects that advance their program goals: protecting the environment, housing the homeless, educating our children, caring for the sick—the whole host of social problems facing society. Although many funders wish they had the freedom and funds to support film and video for its own sake, the reality is that they do not.

Within the foundation world, proponents of media go to considerable lengths to persuade colleagues of the value of media. In 1984, a host of media-friendly foundations commissioned *We ~~Don't~~ Fund Media*, a 20-minute video designed to help coax their colleagues into the world of media funding. The video begins with host Steve Allen at the piano singing the following lyrics to the tune of "Ain't Misbehavin'":

We don't fund media
Not cause we're greediah
Frankly it's because
We don't see the neediah
So don't you pleadiah
Because we don't fund media.

Although the tape is 10 years old (and no longer in distribution), it articulates the same fears about media that foundations express today: Do the producers really need this much money? Will the production be finished? Will it be seen? Through testimonies by media funders discussing successful film and video productions, the tape aims to address and allay these fears.

In recent years, the Council on Foundations, a national association of foundations, and the pro-media lobby within the foundation world have concentrated their efforts on the Film and Video Festival held at the Council's annual meeting. Disappointed by poor attendance through the eighties (the first decade of the festival's life), in 1989 the organizers decided to develop a new approach. They would connect the film festival to the theme of the annual conference (such as "The Struggle for Community," "The Value of Civil Society") and create a catalogue featuring testimonies from the foundation officers who supported the featured productions. The



When the Public Welfare Foundation kicked in $10,000 for distribution of *We All Live Downstream*, a documentary about toxins in the Mississippi River, producer A.C. Warden learned a valuable lesson about what foundations want.

Courtesy Ganter/Greenpeace

catalogue for the first revised festival in 1990 states: "Media's contribution as a grantmaking tool, not an end in itself, has been emphasized in the selection of works that have been used for public education, community organizing, training, and issue advocacy."

"The evaluations of the new festival have been terrific," says Karen Menichelli of the Benton Foundation and chair of the Council's film and video screening committee. Attendance at the festival more than doubled in the first year of the new format. "By connecting the festival to the theme of the conference, it reinforced the programmatic goals of media grantmaking. A project is doomed if it doesn't fit into the foundation's goals. Funders want to make sure that the production gets to the right audiences, and that it is seen often."

Comments from media funders included in the festival program catalogues clearly reinforce these themes:

We tend to fund filmmakers who are as involved in the content as they are in the filmmaking. We look for filmmakers who, in the process of making the film, have connected with citizen action groups and nonprofit interest groups. —*Susan Silk, The Columbia Foundation*

When considering a proposal for funding, the [Ittleson] Foundation looks for a distribution plan and promotion campaign beyond the broadcast.

The Woods Charitable Fund does not have a funding category for film and, in fact, rarely funds film projects. [*From the Bottom Up*] spoke to our priority program area in Chicago—community organizing." —*Lance Buhl, Woods Charitable Fund*

Earlier this year, the Benton Foundation organized the Advocacy Video Conference, the most comprehensive effort to bring together foundations, producers, and nonprofits. "We hope this is the beginning of an ongoing process to define and implement advocacy video," says Eloise Payne of the Benton Foundation.

Partnerships between funders, producers, and nonprofits appear to be the wave of the future from the foundations' point of view. In part, collaboration with nonprofits can ensure the "life beyond broadcast" funders seek. Larry Kirkman of the Benton Foundation encourages funders and fund-seeking filmmakers alike to consider creative alternatives to distribution: "Don't just think about doing 'the film.' Consider creating different pieces for lobbying and organizing. If you distribute 5,000 tapes to activists and it motivates them to get involved, that should be as valuable as three-million people who see it on PBS and forget it the next day." Judy Samuelson, vice president of communications for the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, adds, "I'm not going to look at any proposal that doesn't address itself to how you're going to get the video out. You'd be shocked at how many people apply who have no idea how they're going to distribute the productions, and no idea how they're going to promote them and get them out to a reasonable audience."

One foundation that "doesn't fund media" in theory is the Edna McConell Clark Foundation, which nonetheless recently funded two productions that further its programmatic goals. Rather than fund unsolicited proposals, the foundation commissioned productions that explicitly benefit its constituents—advocacy groups working for prison reform and family preservation.

The first project, *Burden of Justice*, was produced by Dave Ellis, a veteran producer on the subject of prisons and a former recipient of Clark funds. The tape, which examines alternatives to incarceration in the state of Alabama, fits squarely into the foundation's mandate. And no wonder. The foundation provided all the production funds and selected Ellis as producer. They commissioned the production because they believed the advocacy groups they fund would use the tape. The foundation also commissioned a 16-minute version of the half-hour documentary to serve as a grassroots organizing and educational tool. The foundation has purchased hundreds of copies of the tape at cost, which it distributes directly to its grantees.

Malcolm Young of the Sentencing Project, a nonprofit funded by the Clark Foundation, uses the tape at almost every presentation he gives on prison sentencing options. "The tape shows people from the sticks saying, 'We support alternatives to incarceration.' People pay attention to that more than if you brought in something that featured Washington policy people."

Clark Foundation underwriting enables this nonprofit to sell the tape for $15. "The audiences we reach are quite typically folks who do not have the money to put down $80 for a video."

When Clark Foundation program officer Joanne Edgar was asked what she thinks of the video distribution trade, she replied, "We don't think of ourselves as being in the distribution business. We see video as augmenting our grantmaking. We wouldn't do it just as a video. I wish we had the kind of money to just fund videos, but our grantmaking is very targeted."

Edgar also played an active role in the Clark Foundation's support of *Families First with Bill Moyers*, which aired on PBS in March 1992. The foundation came up with the idea for cutting down the 90-minute television program into a series of shorter pieces to be used by family preservation workers and advocates at conferences, meetings, and training sessions. The foundation funded the production and purchased copies of the tapes (some of the 90-minute program but more of the edited pieces) and distributes them to their grantees working on family issues. According to Edgar, the foundation developed and administered an entire marketing strategy, which included numerous receptions, screenings, and targeted mailings to "ensure that the right people saw the tape."

The foundation also worked closely with Moyers' staff and its grantees to maximize the audience for the national broadcast, helping advocacy groups use the PBS broadcast as an opportunity to direct press attention to the issue at the local and state level. "We wanted more than a night on television," says Edgar. "We considered it our job to try to give the program a longer afterlife." The foundation is extremely pleased with the results. The broadcast generated considerable publicity at the national level, press attention increased in the states where foundation grantees are working, and some states have increased their budgets for family preservation.

As foundations become increasingly proactive in their funding practices, funders like McConell Clark may create a new executive producer role for foundations. "Foundations are funding less and less of [proposals that] come in the door and more of what they go out and create," says Samuelson of the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation. This proactive approach is not unique to media funding but is part of a larger trend. Foundations are increasingly collaborating with each other and with nonprofits in order to spend their limited dollars in the most strategic ways. "The number of grants we give to projects that come in the door is down to a single digit. I've done an informal survey, and it's the same with other foundations," says Samuelson. "The [social] problems today are such that it takes that kind of process and planning,. It's not just taking the myriad of proposals and saying 'I like this one and this one and this one.' We're not going to solve the intractable social issues that way."

Foundations seem very interested in funding media when they are presented with the right formula: a carefully developed distribution and promotion strategy, ancillary educational materials, and, most importantly, a plan for how the film or video will have a long, active, and productive life in the hands of the foundation's grantees, one that goes well beyond any initial broadcast. Foundations are contacting their grantees to determine their media needs, so it behooves independents to consider a similar approach. Independents might also consider these words of advice from grantmakers:



Funded by over a half-dozen foundations and private corporations, *It Was a Wonderful Life* follows the lives of six women who, because of personal tragedies, fell into homelessness. It was one of the works screened at the latest Council on Foundations film/video festival.

Courtesy filmmaker

Implicitly, the foundation officer or board member is evaluating proposals on the basis of their potential social impact. An independent filmmaker who presents his or her project principally in terms of aesthetic value or some criteria other than social outcome is probably not communicating well in terms of the foundation's standards and vocabulary. —*John Ramsey, San Diego Community Fund*

Consider the whole plan and start with distribution. Make up in the beginning who your audience is, and where you're going to send it. The more specific you can be for the goals of your tape and the purpose...that just puts you ahead. —*Eloise Payne, Benton Foundation*

I don't see how producers can do it any other way than to team up with nonprofits. By and large, what foundations are trying to do is fund nonprofits to do a certain kind of thing. It makes far more sense for the producer to work in collaboration with groups that are trying to advance the same agenda. —*Judy Samuelson, Charles S. Mott Foundation*

The need for increased foundation support of mediamaking is clear. Environmental advocacy offers a case in point. The Video Project, a nonprofit distributor of environmental films and videos, commissioned a study on foundation funding for environmental issues. Of the approximately 11,000 grants awarded for environmental projects between 1988-1990, only one percent went to film and video. Of this, nearly 77 percent (about $4 million) were awarded by just three foundations: John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur, Ford, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

Clearly, major foundations that have traditionally funded media, like Ford and MacArthur, cannot sustain the entire field. Producers can cultivate new foundation funding sources by tailoring production proposals to foundation goals. The drawback of this approach is self-evident: it can limit



***Words in the Face*, an anthology of 60-second works by 20 "spoken word" artists such as poet Nicole Breedlove (pictured), was a project of *Alive TV*. This PBS series receives support from the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, one of the few foundations that regularly funds media.**

Courtesy Alive TV

the independence of independents and box them into a particular approach. "If projects don't fit neatly into a foundation's funding category, where can anybody get the money?" asks Steve Ladd, director of the Video Project. "If we don't have funding to produce, what's it going to matter how many channels are out there?"

But for the independent who wants to see his or her work used by activist groups, partnerships with nonprofits can provide gratifying and fundable opportunities. A.C. Warden turned the lessons she learned from *We All Live Downstream* into a model for success. A long-time activist for women's rights, she is now producing a series of short documentary videos to educate and train pro-choice supporters in abortion clinic defense. The project started when Warden began documenting violence at clinic blockades for use as legal evidence in court. It turned into a four-part series, *Stand Up for Choice*, when women's groups began asking Warden for the unedited footage to use in training and workshops. To date, she and coproducer Alix Litwak have raised $70,000 in foundation support for the series; they have $30,000 to go. They have also rounded up an advisory board of women's organizations that are signing off "to say, 'Yes, this will work for our constituency.' But we as producers have final creative control," says Warden. Planned Parenthood and the National Organization of Women regularly use the tapes completed so far for volunteer training.

"You often hear filmmakers say 'organizers should do this,' and that's no way to have a relationship," says Warden. "There can be a mutually beneficial relationship, but you need to go out there and find the organizers who know the issue itself better than the filmmakers." Reflecting the view of many foundations, Warden continues, "I've always felt that videos don't stand alone. They have to have people with them. That's where the change happens."

Karen Hirsch is a video producer and director of the Greenpeace video department.



Dave Ellis' *Burden of Justice*, a documentary examining alternatives to incarceration, was commissioned by the Edna McConell Clark Foundation—an example of foundations' increasingly proactive approach to funding.

Courtesy filmmaker

How to Find the Right Foundation

1. Find the foundations whose funding goals most closely match the topic of your production. You can locate this information at the Foundation Center, but you must visit in person and do the research yourself. There are Foundation Centers located in every state; the head office is in Manhattan at 79 Fifth Ave., NY, NY 10003. To find the regional center closest to you, call the head office at (212) 620-4230. In addition, the *Grants Index* and the *Foundation Directory* are available on-line through the Dialog computer access network. For further information, call (800) 334-2564.

2. Call or write the appropriate foundation progam officer *before* submitting your proposal, suggests John Ramsey of the San Diego Community Fund. "The arms-length approach leaves so much room for misunderstanding," he says. "There's so much more in common in these situations than is often discovered through a proposal."

3. If you have already produced work on a specific social issue, approach nonprofits doing relevant work. Can they use the tape as is, or in a shorter format? Consider a joint proposal with nonprofits for reediting and/or distribution. There are several national directories of nonprofits, including *The National Directory of Nonprofit Organizations*, a two-volume set published by the Taft Group (800/877-TAFT), and Charitable Organizations of the United States, published by Gale Research, Inc. (800/877-4253).

4. Apply to the Film and Video Festival, held at the Council on Foundations' annual conference. Submit productions that have been wholly or partially funded by private foundations. The conference generally occurs in April, with submission deadlines in September. Call Evelyn Gibson at (202) 466-6512 to submit work to the 1994 festival.

5. Contact the Benton Foundation, which helps build partnerships between independents, nonprofits, and foundations. For insight into how nonprofits and foundations think about production, consider Benton's *Making Video* guide ($50, including a 27-minute video); (202) 638-5770; fax: 5771.

RIVIERA REHASH

Americans Seek a Presence at Cannes

BARBARA SCHARRES

The Noga Hilton Hotel in Cannes is commonly referred to as the Naugahyde Hilton or the No-good Hilton. Aside from its bad karma in occupying the site of the film festival's beloved original Palais, torn down in the late 1980s after a long-running real estate dispute, the Hilton epitomizes the charmlessness of the town's recent commercial architecture even better than the "new" Festival Palais, already known for a decade as "the bunker." No old world ambiance here, where Directors Fortnight screenings are held in a sub-basement theater decked out in wood-grain formica; no weathered but sumptuous decor that might suggest patronage by fabled millionaires or generations of European royalty. This place is stripped bare for business, and the vaguely futuristic lobby, with its cold gray granite and glaring mirrored surfaces, suggests that housekeeping might more readily involve high pressure hoses than feather dusters.



Australian director Jane Campion became the first woman in history to win the coveted Palme D'Or at Cannes for her poetic feature *The Piano*.

Courtesy filmmaker & Film Center, Chicago, IL

This Hilton—hulking and superficial, functional, and relatively efficient in an impersonal kind of way—might be as good a symbol as any of what is still the world's largest film festival. Although the festival seems to have lost some of the clout it wielded a decade ago in its ability to command premieres, and it has suffered a steady downsizing of its concurrent market, there is no doubt that the whole 12-day event, unwieldy and imperfect as it is, still retains its place as *the* worldwide film industry convention, if not still *the* market.

This was not a great year for Americans, independent or otherwise, in terms of awards or even representation in the official sections of the festival. As far as the troubled and diminished Cannes market is concerned, however, it is becoming increasingly clear that there are opportunities for American independents that did not exist before. It was once a risky and even laughable venture for an independent filmmaker to carry a precious print to Cannes, trespassing into the world of big-time commercial hype in hopes of getting some attention or a distributor. Now there are several routes, with varying price tags, that an independent might take to have a legitimate place in the market. As the market diminishes and there is less to be seen, independents are poised for greater visibility and are attracting more interest from buyers and programmers.

This year's panel of American independents at Cannes speculated on the future of the industry and their place in it. Chaired by film critic Roger Ebert, the panel included festival invitees Jim McBride (*Wrong Man*), Victor Nunez (*Ruby in Paradise*), Michael Steinberg (*Bodies, Rest & Motion*), Tony Chan (*Combination Platter*), Allison Anders (*Mi Vida Loca*), Allen and Albert Hughes (*Menace II Society*), Philip Haas (*The Music of Chance*), and Thomas Fucci (*Don't Call Me Frankie*). Ebert declared the buzz at Cannes was that PG 13-rated "family films" would be the wave of the future. Allen Hughes, while reminiscing that he and his brother started marketing the concept for *Menace II Society* through their agent at the age of 15 and had obtained funding through New Line by the time they turned 20, joked that the next generation of black filmmakers will be people who get their first cameras from riot looting.

The press conference opened the series of seminars and panels hosted annually in the American Pavilion by the Independent Feature Project (IFP). The IFP booth is designed to "promote American independents to distributors and buyers," according to Rachel Shapiro, market coordinator for the IFP. While the events themselves have the quality of window dressing, their value cannot be overlooked at this particular festival. Of greater pertinence to independents not selected for the official festival sections at Cannes is the expanding range of services offered by the IFP and others.

For the filmmaker with very little money who needs a base of operations, the IFP booth at the American Pavilion offers the lowest budget solution.* The membership fee runs roughly $200. "What we've tried to create is a situation where people can use the booth not only as their office or

* IFP, 132 West 21 St., 6th fl., NY, NY 10011; (212) 243-7777, fax: (212) 243-3882.



Philip Haas (*The Music of Chance*) was one of the lucky invitees to Cannes' highly visible festival. For those independents in Cannes' concurrent market, getting your work noticed requires much more work.

Photo: K.C. Bailey, courtesy IRS Media

their home base for messages," Shapiro explains, "but to let people understand that they're all colleagues, that these are the American independents."

At this price, what the filmmaker gets beyond message-taking and camaraderie depends very much on his or her ability to find the right people in Cannes and schmooze. "We don't represent projects," Shapiro says, adding that the IFP's panels and receptions are intended to bring the right people into the pavilion. If the filmmaker wants to arrange market screenings for finished works or projects in development, the IFP has an arrangement with the public relations firm Market to Market, which does block booking. Costs can quickly mount beyond the low-budget range, however, even though Market to Market does not collect a separate commission from IFP booth members. Two screenings plus a market pass for the director cost around $1,900.

For next year, the IFP hopes to expand the possibilities for arranging market screenings, as well as establishing a VIP buyer lounge. Shapiro admits, with a laugh, that filmmakers have learned so well to aggressively pursue buyers that "it can get a little overbearing," and that it will be in everyone's best interest to offer a haven where buyers, sales agents, and distributors can mingle without directors or producers.

A short distance away from the tented American Pavilion, the main market site in the basement of "the bunker" looks like a wasteland. Packed with booths in previous years, the scantily occupied, red-carpeted acres give the appearance that workmen walked away before the place was fully set up. The Independents Showcase booth appears to be busy, at least with filmmakers and their friends. A refrigerated display makes American soft drinks available, and the walls are decorated with film posters, including Jeff Burr's *Eddie Presley*, Paul Bartel's *Public Access*, M. Night Shymalan's *Praying with Anger*, Abraham Vorster's *The Ocre People*, and Gary Bennett's *Rain Without Thunder*.

The Independents Showcase* was started two years ago by Sandy Mandelberger, who had previously worked at the IFP. The showcase is a few notches up from the IFP booth, both in price and services. Those independents who want a market presence at Cannes and can afford the $1,500 to $2,500 fee get a package that includes two market screenings, a party, a booth that works as an office base with an adjacent video screening room for previewing tapes, cooperative advertising, and a catalogue—6,000 of which are distributed as an insert in *Moving Pictures International*. "It's a service meant to be directed at a need for independent producers, both American and European, who come to the market, have films they want to screen, but need a support system while they are here," Mandelberger explains. "The idea was a collective, a cooperative. If one could pool money—pool resources—one could have a greater impact." For an additional $600, filmmakers can also share one of three apartments that Mandelberger has rented—a screaming deal for Cannes, where even a skinny single cot in a closet-sized hotel room can cost $1,200..

The Independents Showcase four-walled a theater in one of the town's many multiplexes and presented 27 screenings of 15 films (11 features and four shorts), which Mandelberger estimates were attended by 30 to 40 buyers each. He says, "Essentially what we're doing is everything the big guys do, but a little more creatively, a little more economically. I actually went ahead and figured out what it would cost somebody to get the

* Sandy Mandelberger, International Media Resources, 599 Broadway, 8th fl., NY, NY 10012-3235; (212) 941-1464, fax: (212) 431-0329.

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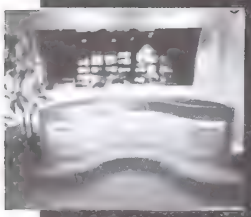
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same exposure that we're offering collectively, and it came to over $15,000. That didn't even include the party."

Except for the short films, Mandelberger admits that the Independents Showcase is an umbrella for larger independents—ones likely to be accompanied to Cannes not only by a director and producer, but a sales representative and lawyer. Like the IFP, he does not personally represent or negotiate sales for any of the films. "For the filmmaker who doesn't have two nickels to rub together, this is definitely an expensive way of doing it," he admits. "They're better off going to the IFP stand."

Sydney J. Levine, president of the Los Angeles-based data tracking service Film Finders, keeps one eye on traffic crossing a hotel lobby and pauses during our interview to warmly greet a guy handing out tote bags that plug a film called *Russian Holiday*. This kind of socializing is the heart of the job for anyone at Cannes. In Levine's case, it serves as research for her publication *Independent Tracking Report*,* which tracks the progress of upwards of 1,300 independent films in production each quarter. Updating information and contacting potential new clients will depend on Levine seeking out people at this festival where, for most attendees, every party conversation and every meal has a not-so-hidden agenda.

Levine's publication is subscribed to by acquisition executives at companies including Universal, Paramount, New Line, and over 30 others. It appears to be a tool of astonishing usefulness for the independent filmmaker who wants to put her/himself on the map in the early stages of production. At no charge to the filmmaker, Levine lists independent films in production from the point where there's partial financing or a director and cast involved. The *Independent Tracking Report* is published on a quarterly, monthly, and, for some clients, weekly basis, with all information acquisition-oriented. She says, "I break it down by title, genre, synopsis, director with his or her credits, producer, writer, budget, contact person and how to reach them, what stage of production it's in, and any kind of comments that are relevant to a film buyer—about the company, about the production, how it's funded, whatever." Formerly vice president of acquisitions at Republic Pictures, Levine calls it, "the book I always wish I'd had."

While the festival generated the usual declarations that it was another bad year, the critical community had few major grumbles, especially with regard to the awards. Although Jane Campion, eight months pregnant, did not attend the ceremony in which her violently sensual romance *The Piano* shared the Palme d'Or with Chen Kaige's *Farewell My Concubine*, she gamely attended the press conference and interviews, providing a wonderfully obvious emblem of female creative power in the days before she became the first woman in history to win the festival's top prize. More than usual, the festival had something for everyone, or almost everyone, and prizes were spread as democratically as anyone might wish—unless you were an American director, that is. After a three-year winning streak, not a single U.S. film received recognition.

Veteran British director Ken Loach, not usually a crowd pleaser, prompted the festival's wildest and most prolonged standing ovation when, at the conclusion of *Raining Stones*, he uncharacteristically slammed the door on fate, morality, and accountability and let his beleaguered working-class hero walk away from his troubles scot free. To no one's surprise, Loach was rewarded by the jury, as was fellow Brit Mike Leigh for *Naked*, a

* Independent Tracking Report, 718 Westbourne Dr., West Hollywood, CA 90089; (310) 657-6397, fax: (310) 657-6608.

The success of Mike Leigh's *Naked* was part of a critical comeback for British cinema at Cannes.

Courtesy The Film Center, Chicago, IL

powerfully dark naturalistic drama about a drifter whose relationships with women are defined by brutality. If audience reaction is any indication, Stephen Frears, yet another British director, could be heading for an arthouse hit the size of his *My Beautiful Launderette* with *The Snapper*, in which an Irish unwed mother comically triumphs over a town full of gossips.

Asian films had a major presence, not so much in numbers as in critically acclaimed quality. Taiwanese director Hou Hsiao-hsien's extraordinary *The Puppet Master*, a fictionalized recreation of the life of the venerable puppet master Li Tien Lu (who appears as himself in the film), had a cumulative impact characteristic of Hou's work, so that the larger meaning of his story only dawns on you after an unhurried two-and-a-half hours. Tian Zhuangzhuang's *The Blue Kite* got the mainland Chinese Fifth Generation director in trouble before the film was even completed with its sensitively told story of the agonies suffered by a family during the Cultural Revolution. Finally assembled in Japan according to the director's instructions in time for the Cannes premiere, it is unequivocally banned in China. The Vietnamese/French *The Scent of Green Papaya*, by Tran Anh Hung, was a genuine find, expressing unclouded wonder through the eyes of an innocent servant girl as she grows to adulthood and achieves this year's best-deserved happy ending.

Chen Kaige's *Farewell My Concubine*, a Chinese/Hong Kong coproduction, also examines the Cultural Revolution in China as part of a movingly melodramatic narrative that spans the interlocked lives and loves of two men, Peking Opera performers, from childhood to old age. It, too, has been banned in China only recently, as bureaucrats belatedly decided that Chen's damning depiction of persecutional rampages of the Cultural Revolution hit too close to home. When Chen took to the stage to accept his Palme d'Or, the first Chinese director to be so honored, he expressed what was possibly the private thought of every filmmaker attending the festival: "Only I know what it took to get to this moment."

Barbara Scharres is the director of the Film Center at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and a freelance writer.

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BUFFALO GALS

Women's Videomaking Flourishes in Upstate New York

ELIZABETH LICATA

Twenty-five years ago, *Time* called Buffalo a "militant acropolis of the avant-garde." Since then, the city—while never again attaining such a pinnacle of hype—has maintained its reputation as an anti-commercial mecca. Independent producers study and sometimes establish themselves here, creating a fluctuating scene characterized by ebbs, flows, and occasional bursts of activity. In recent years, a dominant force in shaping this conceptually diverse and politically pungent environment has been the strong concentration of independent women producers.



Standing together: *Spring of Lies* is one of many collectively produced, issue-oriented media projects to come out of Buffalo's alternative Independent community.

Photo: Robin Tressler, courtesy Media Coalition for Reproductive Rights

Grounded by the activities, programming, and resources of three local institutions—Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center, the State University of New York/Buffalo's Department of Media Study, and Buffalo Media Resources/Squeaky Wheel—independent producers in Buffalo tend to move in and out of fluid, mutating collaborative groups. Many women have joined these loose collectives to quickly and efficiently produce tapes on specific social issues before they vanish from the fickle attention of the mainstream media.

One such collective is the Media Coalition for Reproductive Rights (MCRR). The group was formed in 1989 in response to the growing profile of anti-choice activists in Buffalo, who were beginning a comprehensive harassment campaign against Buffalo women's health clinics. The anti-abortion activities heated up and became national news during Operation Rescue's highly publicized "Spring of Life" campaign in the spring of 1992. Since MCRR was already producing a public access series called *Pro-Choice Planet*, the collective was well positioned to respond quickly to events—and to the bogus position of "neutrality" the mainstream news media was claiming in its coverage of the siege. With the advent of the most violent clinic demonstrations, MCRR immediately produced an hour-long documentary titled *Spring of Lies* (1992). It is probably the most holistic video statement available on those events, highlighting the spectacle, providing analysis and personal viewpoints, and challenging the mainstream media's coverage.

The need to produce an independent version of news events that can counter mainstream coverage is keenly recognized in Buffalo, as is the fact the grabbing the moment often means doing without time-consuming production grants. Chris Hill, who has been active as a Hallwalls video curator and Media Study instructor, has been watching and analyzing the Buffalo scene for over 10 years. "We're not in a city where media production is an industry," she says, "One of the reason the collectives came about is that people had shared political interests. Media Coalition for Reproductive Rights came about at a time when and in a place where it was a big issue. The point of contributing to [collective] projects has to do with advocacy, making a statement that's nationally distributed. But after that, tapes do get rented, grants are applied for, and the group needs to define what happens beyond the life of the tape."

The need to produce an independent version of news events that can counter mainstream coverage is keenly recognized in Buffalo, as is the fact the grabbing the moment often means doing without time-consuming production grants.

"It seems like I've always worked collectively," says Cathy Steffan, who coproduces a weekly public access series called *Studio of the Streets* with Media Study professor Tony Conrad. "I only have experience of Buffalo, so I don't know what it's like in other communities—whether people support each other, even with equipment, as we do. I suspect it's a rare thing." Steffan and Conrad were tireless in fighting for a public access facility, most notably with *Studio of the Streets*, which underlined the importance of studio facilities as well as channel time. Each week Conrad, Steffan, and other participants would conduct interviews on the steps of Buffalo's City Hall, complete with umbrellas and snow gear during the city's frequent spells of inclement weather. When the city finally funded a public access facility, B-Cam, Steffan and Conrad continued their program, switching the emphasis to educational issues.

Buffalo's media infrastructure has been strengthened by B-Cam, which is also used as a screening resource for activists, who show their collaborative tapes on topics such as reproductive rights, censorship, and community politics. This, plus Hallwalls' yearly Video Witnesses festival and Buffalo Media Resources' work-in-progress screenings, give makers an opportunity to get valuable feedback on timely work from a group of supportive peers. As SUNY Media Study graduate Meg Knowles says, "I realized I was seeing the same 30 people at all the screenings—people whom I now know well and often work with. Everyone has an equal weight. Your opinion is

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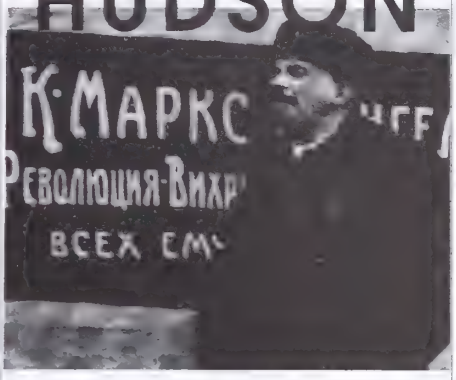
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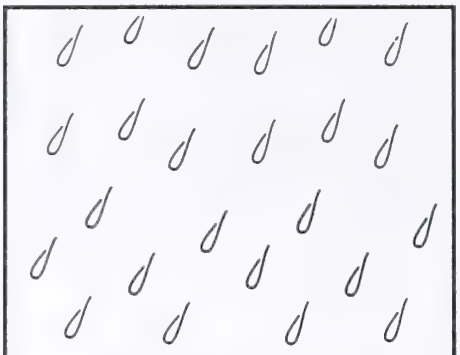
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Cheryl Jackson's *I Want to Be You* untangles the web of icons surrounding the feminine persona.

Photo: Tom Loonan, courtesy Albright-Knox Art Gallery

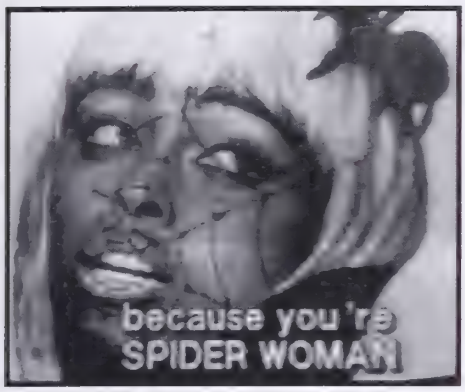
worthwhile, even if you haven't edited yet. It's a good community that way. People don't always have to grab credit, like, 'This is my project; you are my crew.'"

Knowles is a member of another collective, 8MM News, known for initiating controversial projects. In 1990 8MM produced *Disorderly Concept*, a documentation of arrests following a protest (also planned by the group) over the cancellation of a performance by Survival Research Laboratories, a performance art group, at Artpark in Lewiston, New York. The tape was ready for public viewing via cable access a few days after the protesters were released on bail. The protest's witty visuals—a huge wooden Bible, a chainsaw fake suicide, and symbolic disrobings—stayed the index fingers of many channel flippers.

8MM News' next project, a conceptually intriguing but inherently risky idea, was to follow local broadcast news teams on location around Western New York. The collective's members would perform often intrusive deconstructions of the scripted routines of Buffalo's news hacks. They managed to produce a widely distributed four-part series, *The News Diaries* (1990), and were banned from the premises of at least one local TV station. The group's final project involved Knowles and four other members of the team—Garland Godhino, Lisa Laske, Cyndi Cox, and Maria Venuto—who produced *P4W: No Healing Here* (1992), a documentary on a women's prison in Canada. Gritty and compelling, *P4W* presents interviews with victims of the Canadian prison system, focusing on a Kingston, Ontario, penitentiary where six native women committed suicide within 18 months of each other. The 8MM news collaborators wisely rely on the raw strength of their material, letting their subjects tell the story. This tape has been screened at festivals and venues throughout the country, giving 8MM news continued life, at least on paper. The group now lies dormant while its members continue with more pressing matters of career and survival.

Collective activity inevitably wanes as members come to realize that advocacy is important but not always as spiritually and aesthetically satisfying as solo projects. While the individual work of Buffalo's women is highly idiosyncratic, much of it is grounded in issues of gender and sociopolitical marginalization. Some of this work was featured in the March 1993 edition of Visible Women, Buffalo Media Resource's yearly series of video, film, and photography by women. It included individual works by such local producers as Barbara Lattanzi, Chris Hill, Jody Lafond, Cheryl Jackson, Meg Knowles, Teresa Getter, and Annie Fergerson.

A rigorous theoretician as well as a longtime



media activist, Barbara Lattanzi is now completing a series of tapes based on the relationship of personal history and technology, the first of which, *Female Masochism and Science: Powerful Partners* (1993), was screened at Visible Women. The tape's diaristic narrative is brilliantly blended with simple paintbox graphics and a blaring jingoist soundtrack.

MCRR and 8MM News member Jody Lafond won a trip to Japan as the first prize in a competition held by Luminous, a Japanese women's media group. She made a tape about the experience titled *Ticket to Tokyo*. Lafond created a personal, diaristic view of her whirlwind tour, but she also went beyond this, focusing as well on her fleeting glimpses of Japanese daily routine, most notably the spectacle of the "salarymen," the platoons of corporate employees riding the Tokyo subways. In *Ticket to Tokyo* Lafond is highly conscious of her outsider position in the socioeconomic environment of her own country, as well as in Japan.

Cheryl Jackson's *I Want To Be You*, a structuralist montage of feminine icons punctuated by Jackson's deadpan mantra-like narration, adds irony and cultural critique to the feminist politic evinced in Jackson's work with MCRR and her mission as director of Buffalo Media Resources. Teresa Getter's fake autobiographical documentary *Face the Music* (1992), a sharp, contemplative redefinition of the idea of "ladylike" public behavior, continues in the 8MM tradition of deconstructing TV news cliches. Annie Fergerson, a relative newcomer from Montana, is interested in digital manipulation and fictional narrative. Fergerson's surreal tape *The Whole House Is Empty* (1993) takes cues from soap opera as it looks at the sincere need for transcendent banalities within everyday existence.

Future projects from the Visible Women artists will focus on gambling on Native American reservations, UFO abductions, Niagara Falls souvenirs, the healing professions, and the Daughters of the American Revolution. Diverse topics—but no doubt it will be possible to trace within all of them the self-conscious critiques and sociopolitical advocacy so important to these producers' collective experiences.

Elizabeth Licata writes about Western New York media, performance, and visual art.

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LET'S MAKE A DEAL

The Acquisition/Distribution Agreement

MARK LITWAK

There are several ways to develop or produce a film. Beginning with an idea or the movie rights to an existing literary property, a studio can hire a writer to create a script. The studio's development staff works with the writer to craft the story. Most scripts developed by studios never get produced.

Other movies begin with a script developed outside the studio. Here a writer, working on his or her own, or hired by an independent producer, writes a screenplay. After it is finished, it may be packaged (joined) with other elements (e.g., a star or director) and presented to the studio for financing and distribution. The big three talent agencies (CAA, ICM, and William Morris) are responsible for most packaging.

Sometimes films are both developed and pro-



duced away from the studio or company that ultimately distributes them. These independently produced projects are often dependent on investors or presale distribution deals (selling off various foreign distribution rights) to finance production. The producer then enters an acquisition agreement with the distributor for release of the picture. This is called a negative pick-up deal.

Although the terms of negative pick-up deals vary, the studio/distributor typically pays for all distribution, advertising, and marketing costs. The studio/distributor and producer share profits. Because the producer has taken the risk of financing production, he or she probably can obtain a better definition of net profits than if he/she made the film with studio financing. Profits may be split 50/50 between the distributor and producer without a deduction for a distribution fee. Of course, the independent producer takes the risk that if the film turns out poorly, no distributor will want it. Then the producer can incur a substantial loss.

In a negative pick-up deal, the distributor will often agree to give the producer an advance of his/her share of the profits. The producer can use this money to repay investors. Producers will want to obtain as large an advance as possible because they know they may never see anything on the back end of the deal (i.e., no profits).

The distributor wants to pay as small an advance as possible and usually resists giving an amount that is more than the cost of production. Its executives will propose, "We'll be partners. We will put up all the money for advertising and promotion. If the picture is successful, we will share in its success." Sound good?

Unfortunately, distributors have been known to engage in creative accounting, and profit participants rarely see any return on their share of "net profits" because of the way that term is defined. Consequently, the shrewd producer tries to get as large an advance as possible. He/she also tries to retain foreign rights and keep them from being cross-collateralized. (This means the monies earned from several markets are pooled. For example, let's say your picture made $1 million in England and lost $1 million in France. If those territories were cross-collateralized, and you were entitled to a percentage of the net revenue, you would get nothing. On the other hand, if the territories were not cross-collateralized, you would get your percentage of the English revenues and the distributor would absorb the loss incurred in France.)

Negotiating the Distribution Deal

The most important advice I can offer filmmakers seeking distribution is, *Don't brag about how little money you spent to make the picture before you conclude your distribution deal.* You may feel proud of making a great-looking picture for a mere $400,000. But if the distributor knows that is all you have spent, you will find it difficult to get an advance beyond that. It would be wiser not to reveal your investment, recognizing that production costs are not readily discernible from viewing a film. Remember, the distributor has no right to examine your books (assuming the distributor has not provided financing). What you have spent is between you, your investors, and the I.R.S.

Negative pick-up deals can be negotiated before, during, or after production. Often distributors become interested in a film after viewing it at a film festival and observing audience reaction. All the studios and independent distributors have one or more staffers in charge of acquisitions. It is the job of these acquisitions executives to find good films to acquire.

It is not difficult to get acquisition executives to view your film. Once production has been announced, don't be surprised if they begin calling you. They will track the progress of your film so they can see it as soon as it is finished—before their competitors get a shot at it.

From the filmmaker's point-of-view, you will get the best distribution deal if you have more than one distributor interested in acquiring your movie. That way you can play them off against each other to get the best terms. But what if one distributor makes a pre-emptive bid for the film, offering you a $500,000 advance, and you have only 24 hours to accept the offer? If you pass, you may not be able to get a better deal later. It is possible you may fail to obtain any distribution deal at all. On the other hand, if you accept the offer, you may be foreclosing the possibility of a more lucrative deal that could be offered to you later. Consequently, it is important to orchestrate the release of your film to potential distributors to maximize your leverage.

Orchestrating the Release

1) *Keep the film under wraps.* Don't show your film until it is finished. Executives may ask to see a rough cut. They will say, "Don't worry. We're professionals. We can extrapolate and envision what the film will look like with sound and titles." Don't believe them. Most people can't extrapolate. They will view your unfinished film and think it amateurish. First impressions last.

The only reason to show your film before completion is if you are desperate to raise funds to finish it. The terms you can obtain under these circumstances will usually be less than those given on completion. If you must show a work in progress, exhibit it on a Moviola or flatbed editing table. People have lower expectations viewing a film on an editing console than when it is projected in a theater.

2) *Arrange a screening.* Invite executives to a screening; don't send them a videocassette. If you send a tape to a busy executive, he will pop it into his VCR. Ten minutes later the phone will ring, and he hits the pause button. Then he watches another 10 minutes until his secretary interrupts him. After being distracted 10 times, he passes on your film because it is "too choppy." Well, of course it's choppy with all those interruptions. You want to get the executive in a dark room, away from distractions to view your film with a

> Distributors have been known to engage in creative accounting, and profit participants rarely see any return on their share of "net profits" because of the way that term is defined. Consequently, the shrewd producer tries to get as large an advance as possible.

live audience—hopefully one that will respond positively. So rent a screening room, invite all the acquisition executives you can, and pack the rest of the theater with your friends and relatives, especially Uncle Herb with his infectious laugh.

3) *Make the buyers compete against each other.* Screen the film for all distributors simultaneously. Some executives will attempt to get an early look—that is their job. Your job is to keep them intrigued until it is complete. You can promise to let them see it "as soon as it is finished." They may be annoyed to arrive at the screening and see their competitors. But this will get their competitive juices flowing. They will know that they better make a decent offer quickly if they hope to get the film.

4) *Obtain an experienced advisor.* Retain an experienced producer's rep or entertainment attorney to negotiate your deal. Filmmakers know about film, distributors know about distribution. Don't kid yourself and believe you can play in their arena and win. There are many pitfalls to avoid. Get yourself an experienced guide to protect your interests. Any decent negotiator can improve a distributor's offer enough to outweigh the cost of his or her services.

5) *Investigate the distributor.* Always check the track record and experience of each distributor. As an entertainment attorney who represents many independent filmmakers, I often find myself in the position of trying to get unscrupulous distributors to live up to their contracts. I am amazed at how many distributors refuse to abide by the terms of their own distribution agreements. The savvy filmmaker will carefully investigate potential distributors by calling filmmakers who have contracted with them. I recently read a Standard & Poor's report on a distributor and was shocked to learn that the company was $2.3 million in arrears on royalty payments. One can also check the Superior Court Dockets in Los Angeles to see if a company has been sued.

Mark Litwak is an entertainment attorney and law professor in Santa Monica, California, who will be teaching a seminar for independent filmmakers at New York City's New School on October 22 and 23. This article is an excerpt from his latest book, Dealmaking in the Film and Television Industry *(Silman-James Press, 1993).*

Selecting a Distributor: A Checklist

1. Amount of advance.

2. Extent of rights conveyed. Domestic and/or foreign. Ancillary rights? Are any markets cross-collateralized? Does the distributor deal in every market or use subdistributors?

3. Is there a guaranteed marketing commitment?

4. Does the producer have any input or veto power over artwork and theater selection in the top markets?

5. Track record, financial health, and reputation of distributor.

6. Are monthly or quarterly accounting statements required? Does the filmmaker have the right to audit the books?

7. To what extent does the distributor plan to involve the filmmakers in promotion and publicity?

8. Marketing strategy: demographics of intended market, grassroots promotion efforts, film festivals, release pattern, etc.

9. Split of revenues and accounting of profits: Is there a distribution fee? Overhead fees? If a subdistributor is used, are double distribution fees deducted? Is the distributor using a subsidiary company as subdistributor? Does the subdistributor also earn a profit? How are the profits divided?

10. Distributor leverage with exhibitors. Can the distributor collect monies owed? What terms does the distributor typically give exhibitors?

11. Any competing films handled by distributor? Conflicts of interest? Will the distributor favor their in-house films over those acquired from outside?

12. Does the producer have the right to regain distribution rights if the distributor pulls the plug early on distribution?

13 Personal affinity and rapport between producer and distributor executives.

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CHIP SHOTS

The New 3-Chip Camcorders

BARTON WEISS

For the last several years many of us have been attempting to use "consumer" video cameras to achieve professional results. Most of the problems in doing this come from lack of image control, poor lenses, unbalanced mic inputs (mini plugs that are not really isolated from interference), and poor color reproduction due to a single image-sensing device or "chip." Other problems come from operator error or just plain bad camera work, which makes all of these cameras look a lot worse. Just because a camera has a lot of automatic features doesn't mean you don't have to pay attention while shooting.



Handy hand-helds: the Sony CCD-VX3 (left) and Panasonic AG3.

Photo Mark Lutrell

Some of these technical problems are being addressed by a new generation of "prosumer" camcorders that, like many professional cameras, have three separate image-sensing chips. Panasonic's AG3 and Sony's CCD VX3 both segregate the colors after they pass through the lens (through dichroic mirrors, if you need to know), so that the resulting colors on the first generation and, more importantly, in subsequent generations will be as bright and saturated as need be. These cameras do look better. In an informal test, I fed a Betacam SP camera, then a CCD VX3 into a monitor, and nobody could tell the difference.

The Sony CCD VX3 is about the size of a shoe. It lists for $3,800 with a street price of $3,299. It has a handy handle on top and weighs in at 3.3 pounds without battery and tape. With an adaptor available from Cinema Products, you can use it on the Steadicam JR (but you need to be strong). It is, of course, Hi8—meaning you have two hours per tape, a dropout problem, and no real timecode. It has data code, which automatically encodes the time and date on the tape (but not in the picture), which is nice for logging.

Panasonic's AG3 is much smaller than the Sony. The size is so small you can take it places you wouldn't feel comfortable going even with the Sony. But, in other circumstances, it will be hard for others to take you seriously with this palm-sized camera, which weighs around two pounds without the battery. It lists for $3,300 and has a street price of $2,500. The Panasonic AG3 is an SVHS-C camera, meaning it only has 20 to 40 minutes on a tape, and it's harder to find tape stock. For many people, the choice between these two cameras has more to do with choosing between Hi8 and SVHS-C. The Panasonic also has an array of digital effects, wide screen, dissolve, freeze frame, and other options that can be done better in postproduction. (Remember, when you use an effect on a shot, you limit your editing choices.) It also has a digital time base corrector, which provides clean playback from the camera.

The point of three chips is color, and indeed the colors are better. In my opinion, the Sony is a bit too bright, but the camera allows you to bring some of the color down. The AG3's colors are not quite as bright, but are still rather beautiful—except in medium to low light, where the camera performs poorly. Unless you hit the digital gain up button (which is a nice special effect if you like strobic motion) or are shooting stills, it is unusable in normal low light conditions. This is a major drawback to the Panasonic, since independent documentarians seem to shoot low light. The Sony looks astonishing beautiful in low light. I can sometimes see more color in the monitor than I can with the naked eye.

Panasonic's AG3 gives you the added advantage of a color viewfinder to see this wonderful world, which is a mixed blessing. It is always good to have a color monitor while shooting to judge color temperature. (Sometimes the auto white balance looks better than the manual, but if you don't have a monitor to check, how would you know?) But it's hard to determine focus with this

For many people, the choice between these two cameras has more to do with choosing between Hi8 and SVHS-C.

viewfinder—not impossible, but difficult. There is no manual zoom rod, so in order to manually focus you have to power zoom in to find focus (difficult) and then power zoom out. If you are working in documentary, your subject will already have moved by this point.

What surprised me the most about Sony's CCD VX3 was that it fixed many of the other problems I've had shooting with "prosumer" gear. This camera has the best lens I've seen on any consumer camera. Not only is it sharp, but it's versatile. It is wide enough to shoot a medium close-up while four feet away from a subject and keep it in focus without a wide-angle adaptor, which degrades the image quality. Both the Sony and Panasonic lenses have good auto-focus systems which respond quickly, even in relatively low light. For some reason, lens flair on the Sony appears green, so flagging the light is helpful.

Another factor in chosing a camera is image control, particularly exposure control. In professional cameras there is a zebra pattern in the viewfinder, which has thin lines at the point of over-exposure. These help you to make absolute and relative judgments about what is happening with the light in your scene without getting out a light meter. They protect you from making costly mistakes. The Sony includes the zebra pattern, the Panasonic doesn't. Both cameras have good exposure control, but the Sony allows you to set real f-stops to half a stop.

But given the price of these two cameras—and, for a consumer camera, it's hefty—there are some missing features. There are no cannon inputs for the mics, nor are there VU meters to check the level. For that matter, there is no level control, which is a problem. Also missing is digital sound.

Despite these omissions, both cameras are a major step in enabling low-budget producers to get better looking images in small, relatively inexpensive boxes. If we can produce images that look better technically, it will give the engineers and gatekeepers one less excuse for not airing our work. Although much of the bad video I see these days wouldn't be improved by these cameras, the good video would look a whole lot better.

Barton Weiss is a film/videomaker, an AIVF board member, and artistic director of the Dallas Video Festival.

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BROADCAST EDUCATION ASSOCIATION FACULTY PRODUCTION COMPETITION, early 1994, OH. Videos & interactive works produced by college faculty are eligible for juried production competition. Entrants must become member of BEA to be eligible. Deadline: Nov. 12. Contact: Andy Marko, 1994 BEA Juried Faculty Production Competition, Miami University, 153 Williams Hall, Mass Comm., Oxford, OH 45056; (513) 529-3548.

METROPOLITAN DETROIT INDEPENDENT FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 26, MI. Ind. works accepted. Return postage must be incl. w/ entries. Formats: 16mm, S-8, 8mm. Deadline: Dec. 15. Contact: Gus Calandrino, Metropolitan Detroit Independent Film Festival, 22018 Harper St., Clair Shores, MI 48080; (313) 779-0707.

NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, May, CA. This key US fest for nontheatrical media is now in 24th yr. Top winners eligible for Academy Award competition in doc & short subject cats. Eligible prods in 145 cats incl. docs, multimedia, dramatic features & shorts, animation, classroom programs, medical/health programs, training/instructional tapes, special interest videos, made for TV programs, PSAs, film & video art, student-made docs & narratives. Entries must have been completed between Jan. 1, 1992 & Dec. 1, 1993. Fest held in Oakland & San Francisco. Entry fees: $85 & up, depending on length; student fees $30 & up. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", multimedia prods. Deadline: Dec. 1; entries postmarked on or before Nov. 1 receive discount of $5 per entry; late entries accepted through Dec. 15 w/ late fee. Contact: Competition Director, Nat'l Educational Film & Video Festival, 566 13th St., Oakland, CA 94612; (510) 465-6885; fax: 2835.

NEW YORK UNDERGROUND FILM FESTIVAL, March, NY. First annual fest celebrates "guerrilla filmmaking" &/or films considered alternative in nature or intent. Cats: narrative, doc, experimental, animation, music video. Prizes awarded to top winner in each. Features & shorts (under 45 min.) accepted. Entry fee: $45 feature, $35 short. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on 1/2". Deadline Jan. 21 (possible extensions for premieres/features). Contact: Todd Phillips, fest director, New York Underground Film Festival, PO Box 367, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276; (212) 995-2091.

POETRY FILM AND VIDEOPOEM FESTIVAL, December, CA. Now in 18th yr, competitive fest has been integrated into larger Festival of Poetry in the Arts.

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser, director of the FIVF Festival Bureau. Listings do not constitute an endorsement. Since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. In order to improve our reliability and make this column more beneficial to independents, we encourage all film- and videomakers to contact FIVF Festival Bureau with their personal festival experiences, positive and negative.

Specializes in films & videos that "integrate poetry, film & music in a unified work of art" & "incorporate verbal poetic statement in narrated or captioned form." This yr's theme: Hell or Utopia, but entries need not conform. Max. length: 16 min. 76 works screened last yr. Narrative, doc (involving poetry), video & animated works accepted. Entry fee: $10. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Nov. 1. Contact: Herman Berlandt, Poetry Film & Videopoem Festival, Fort Mason Center, San Francisco, CA 94123; (415) 776-6602.

SAN FRANCISCO FILM FESTIVAL/GOLDEN GATE AWARDS COMPETITION, Apr. 28-May 12. Presented by San Francisco Film Society, competitive section of 37th San Francisco Int'l Film Festival is now in 32nd yr. Annual audiences average 40,000. Competition entries come from 37 countries; last yr 857 entries submitted. Awards of trophies & cash honoraria in 4 divisions: Film/Video (short narrative, artist profile, art work, animation, history, current events, sociology, environment); TV (feature, comedy, drama, fine arts/variety, arts/humanities, sociology, history, current affairs, environment); Bay Area Film/Video (shorts, doc); New Visions (experimental/personal/abstract). Other cats incl. nature, biography docs & music videos; new cats are Short Doc on film or video under 15 min. & Children's Programs, for live action dramatic or comedic programs produced for TV for entertainment of children 7-12. New award given each yr to film/video about specific theme insufficiently explored in mainstream media; in 1994 subject is "Children of the World." Main section curated & noncompetitive. Formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Dec. 3. Contact: Brian Gordon, Competition Coordinator, San Francisco International Film Festival, 1521 Eddy St., San Francisco, CA 94115-4102; (415) 567-4641; fax: (415) 921-5032.

SMOKY MOUNTAIN FILM, VIDEO AND MEDIA ART, October, NC. Fest incl. 4 divisions: film/video (any format) in cats of features, short drama, doc, experimental/visual art, animation/graphic art, industrial, commercial/promotional, student; audio in cats of audio/experimental, audio soundtrack, student audio prod.; scriptwriting: same cats as film/video; Latin American w/ special awards for Latin American subjects, themes & to Latin American media makers. $1,500 in awards. Entry fee: $18, 1st entry, $6 each additional entry; student: $10. Colleges, schools & universities can enter on behalf of students at rate of $100 per 20 entries. Deadline: Oct. 11. Contact: Carlos, Smoky Mountain Art Center, PO Box 637, Whittier, NC 28789; (704) 488-2403/488-488-9233; fax: (704) 488-2498. Attn: Carlos, Marketing Dept.

SUNDANCE FILM FESTIVAL, Jan. 20-30, UT. Sundance has become premiere US showcase for new ind. films; many important works have premiered & launched their theatrical life at this competitive fest. Dramatic & doc films accepted. Entries must be at least 51 percent US financed (films produced, financed, or initiated by major film studios ineligible for competition, but films purchased after completion eligible). Work must be completed after Oct. 15, 1992. Entries may not open theatrically before Feb. 1, 1994 in more than 3 N. American markets or be broadcast nat'lly & may not play in more than 2 domestic film fests prior to Sundance. Dramatic films must be at least 70 min. & docs at least 50 min. Shorts ineligible for competition, but may be submitted for fest screening. Awards: Grand Prize (jury ballot); Cinematography Award (jury ballot); Audience Award (popular ballot); Filmmakers' Trophy (filmmakers' vote). Films selected in drama cat. also compete for Screenwriters' Award (jury ballot) & those in doc cat. compete for Freedom of Expression Award. One rep from each competing film invited to attend as fest's guest. Fest attended by large number of distributors, programmers, journalists & agents. Entry fee: $50 ($20 short). Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 3/4" or 1/2". Deadline: Oct. 22 (features in & out of competition); Oct. 8 (shorts). Contact: Geoffrey Gilmore, programming director, Sundance Film Festival, Ind. Film Competition, 10401 Venice Blvd., Ste. 203, Los Angeles, CA 90034; (310) 204-2091; fax: 3901.

WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL, March, NY. Second annual noncompetitive fest of the Women's Resource Center of New York. Looking for 16mm films or 3/4" videos by women &about women. Two tapes per entry, no rough-cuts or works in progress. 1/2" VHS should be submitted for review by October 30. Age of film does not matter. No entry fee. Send tape w/ name, address, phone number & length of film on the tape cartridge & stamped, self-addressed return envelope to: Dept. H23, Women's Resource Center of New York, 2315 Broadway, Ste. 306, New York, NY 10024; (212) 875-8533; fax: 8629.

Foreign

BERLIN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, February, Germany. One of world's top int'l fests, w/ over 29,000 attending fest & European Film Market each yr. Now in 44th yr, Berlin offers ind. films hospitable atmosphere. Fest, supported by all levels of German gov't, is divided into 7 sections, each w/ own character & organization. Int'l Competition: by invitation, programmed by fest director Moritz de Hadeln, 35mm & 70mm features & shorts. Int'l Forum of New Cinema: known for strong programming of US ind. films, headed by Ulrich Gregor. Panorama: noncompetitive section of official program, headed by Wieland Speck. Both sections screen narrative, doc & experimental works. Forum specializes in avant-garde intellectual & political films (60 min. & up, 16mm & 35mm). Panorama presents wide range of work from low-budget to more commercial ventures, incl. studio films (features & shorts under 15 min., 16mm, 35mm, 70mm). Other sections: Kinderfilmfest, 35mm, 16mm films over 59 min. produced for children; New German

Films, & Retro. The European Film Market is important meeting place for screenings & sales, w/ reps from over 40 countries. All entries must be produced in 12 mos. preceding fest & not released theatrically or on video in Germany. American Independent & Features Abroad (AIFA), organized by New York Foundation in the Arts (NYFA), is consortium of 85 media orgs. & filmmakers. Open to orgs. & fest films over 45 min. Also reps select features/docs in Market. Offers services, incl. booth in Market (center for US activity, messages & more); American Ind. catalog; orientation packets & sessions; fest accreditation; press conference, reception, etc. For info on AIFA, contact: NYFA's hotline (212) 366-6900, ext. 333 or fax (212) 366-1778. Fest deadline: Nov. 30. Contact: Internationale Filmfestspiele Berlin, Budapester Strasse 50, D-1000 Berlin 30, Germany; tel: 49 30 254890; fax: 49 30 25489249.

CINEMA DU REEL, Mar. 11-20, France. Now in 16th yr, fest focuses on visual anthropology & social documentation works. Will be followed by 13th Overview of Ethnographic Films to be held at the Musee de l'Homme, so selected films will be shown either at the fest or the Overview. Full-length & short films eligible. Entries must have been completed between Jan. 1 & Dec. 31, 1993 & not submitted for previous fests; not released on France, not released commercially, not broadcast on any of the French TV channels & not awarded a prize at an int'l fest in France. Selection committee will determine whether film will be in int'l competition, French panorama, panorama of docs from Italy, or special screenings. Awards: Prix du Cinema du Reel (50,000FF), Prix du Court Metrage (15,000), Prix Joris Ivens (15,000FF), Prix des Bibliotheques (30,000FF), Prix du Patrimoine (15,000FF), Le Prix de la SCAM (30,000FF) & Le Prix Louis Marcorelles. Fest may keep video copies of selected films. Send information about the film (synopsis, technical details) & entry form will be forwarded; do not send preview cassettes until requested. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on cassette. Deadline: Nov. 1. Contact: Suzette Glenadel, Cinema du Reel, Festival International de Films Ethnographiques et Sociologiques, BPI-Centre Georges Pompidou, 19, rue Beaubourg, 75197 Paris cedex 04, France; tel: 44 78 44 21/44 78 45 16; fax: 44 78 12 24.

CRETEIL INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 18-27, France. One of world's oldest fests of films by women & important showcase for those works, now celebrating 16th yr. Held in Paris suburb of Creteil, fest annually attracts audiences of over 35,000 incl. filmmakers, journalists, distributors & buyers. Controversial & critical discussions traditionally part of procedings. Sections: competition, retro of modern woman director, self-portrait of an actress, young cinema, int'l program. Special events in 94 incl tribute to pioneers of women's film to celebrate centennial of birth of cinema; European section. Competition sections selects 12 narrative features, 12 feature docs, & 30 shorts. All films shown 3 times. Cash & equipment prizes: 25,000FF Prix du Public in each cat; 25,000FF Grand Jury Prize, 6 other prizes for total of 65,000FF. Films must be directed or co-directed by women, completed since Mar. 1, 1992, not theatrically released in France, broadcast on French TV, or shown at other French fests. Student prods ineligible. All subjects, genres & styles considered. Fest pays for accommodations (3 days) for filmmakers & round-trip shipping for selected films. Transcripts, synopsis, publicity & bio materials should be avail. US preselection will be made by US rep Berenice Reynaud. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on 1/2" only. Entry fee: $15, payable to Berenice Reynaud. Deadline: Nov.

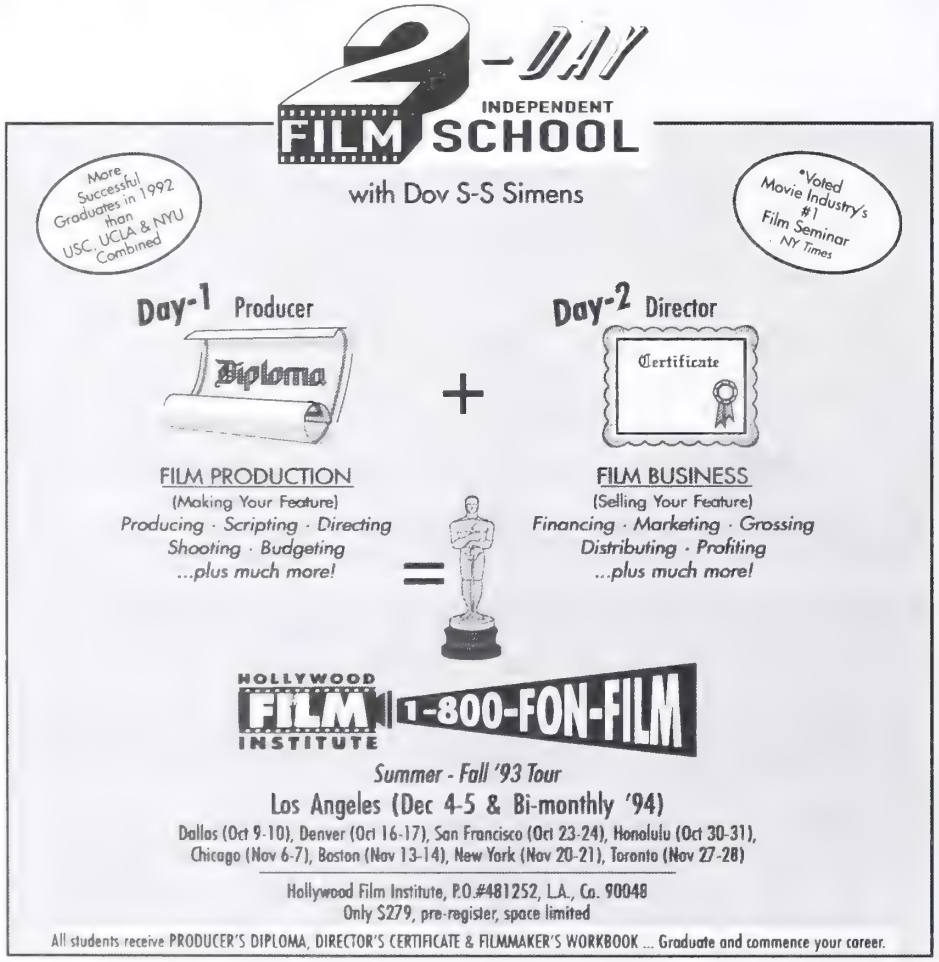
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1. For appls, send SASE: Berenice Reynaud, California Institute of Arts-School of Film/Video, 2700 McBean Parkway, Valencia, CA 91355; fax: (805) 253-7824. Do not call. All phone inquiries handled by Kathryn Bowser at FIVF; (212) 473-3400.

INPUT (INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC TELEVISION SCREENING CONFERENCE), May 15-21, Canada. Only worldwide conference (not a fest or market) where public TV & film producers gather to view & discuss work; good forum for exposure to int'l programs. Participants discuss original & innovative TV programs of previous yr. Held since 1978 in different country each yr (Montreal, this year). Programs submitted to INPUT go through 2-step selection process, first on nat'l level & then int'l level. In Nov. 1993, US Secretariat will select 23 programs to advance to int'l selection; in Feb. 1994, int'l committee will select final programs. If program is selected, producer/director will be required to represent it at conference. Format: 3/4" only. No entry fee; entry regulations require 12 copies of entry form. Deadline: Nov. 12. Contact: Terry Pound, US INPUT Secretariat, South Carolina ETV, 1101 George Rogers Blvd., Columbia, SC 29201; (803) 737-3233; fax: 3505.

MONTREAL INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF FILMS AND VIDEOS ON ART, March 8-13, Canada. Competitive fest for prods related to the arts, incl. painting, sculpture, architecture, design, crafts, museology, restoration, photography, fashion, interior decoration, literature, dance, music & theatre. Fest not designed for experimental film or video, but for prods on art-related subjects. Features & shorts accepted. Sections: Creative Crossroads (in competition); Trajectories (in competition); Focus (tribute); Reflections (films/videos by artists); Artificial Paradise (film/video design); Time Remembered (commemorations & archival films). Entries in competition must have been completed since 1991; no date restrictions on other sections. Awards include: Grand Prix, Best Director, Best Film for TV, Best Biography, Best Essay, Prize for Creativity. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4". Entry fee: $25. Deadline: Oct. 30. Contact: Rene Rozon, fest director, Festival International du Cinema et sur la Video de l'Art, 640 St. Paul West St., Ste. 406, Montreal, Quebec, Canada H3C 1L9; tel: (514) 874-1637; fax: 9929.

SHEFFIELD INTERNATIONAL DOCUMENTARY FESTIVAL, Mar. 23-30. First UK int'l fest dedicated to "excellence in doc film: historical & contemporary." Themèd fest screenings, by invitation only, incl. European Showcase, Personal Choice (film or series commissioned to challenge or shape view of future of doc film), Convictions (passion & commitment to doc as expressed in work of particular filmmaker), Under Fire (tribute to camera crews & directors filming in combat, incl. conflicts in Bosnia, Gulf, Vietnam, Algeria, Northern Ireland, S. Africa), companion series Aftermath (work dealing w/ aftermath of war or conflicting issues of pacifism & historical covert or banned docs), Tribute. Director Midge MacKenzie would like written materials only for fest programs *Under Fire* & *Aftermath*, particularly critical films that deal w/ Vietnam War & aftermath of war; she will be pre-screening in NY in mid-Nov. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, video. Deadline: Nov. 1. Contact: Midge MacKenzie, fest director, Festival Office, The Workstation, 15 Paternoster Row, Sheffield S1 2BX, United Kingdom; tel: 0742 796511; fax: 0742 796522.

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OFFICE SPACE FOR RENT: Prime Manhattan location. 2,000 sq. ft. avail. in NoHo building (Broadway, between Bleecker & Houston) that houses nonprofit film, publishing & environmental groups. Space ideal for share or prod. offices & can be subdivided. Rent negotiable; call John at (212) 473-3400.

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Distribution

TAPESTRY INTERNATIONAL, distributor of ind. programs, seeks new product for worldwide TV distribution. Contact Lincoln Richmond at Tapestry International, 920 Broadway, NY, NY 10010; (212) 677-6007, fax: 473-8164. Enclose SASE for prompt return.

SEEKING WORKS for business market. Video Publishing House distributes videos on leadership, motivation, quality management, customer service, globalization, etc. Nancy, Video Publishing House, 930 N. National Pkwy, Schaumburg, IL 60137; (800) 824-8889.

FOUNDATION FOR MEDIA EDUCATION seeks progressive/alternative works dealing w/ issues of media & cultural politics for domestic & int'l distribution to educational markets. (413) 586-4170/8398.

GUIDANCE ASSOCIATES/THE CENTER FOR HUMANITIES, publishing leader in educational film/video for over 30 yrs, seeks new product for upcoming catalogs. Contact: Will Goodman or Sally Paris, 90 South Bedford Rd., Mt. Kisco, NY 10549; (800) 431-1242.

SEEKING NEW WORKS for educational & health care markets. Fanlight Productions distributes films/videos in areas of health, sociology, psychology, etc. Karen McMillen, Fanlight Prods, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130; (800) 937-4113.

CS ASSOCIATES, w/ over 20 yrs experience, represents inds. in foreign & domestic TV & video markets. We seek new programs of all types. Send preview cassette to 102 E. Blithedale Ave., Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-6060.

SEEKING NEW WORKS for educational markets. Educational Productions distributes videos on early childhood education, special ed. & parent ed. Contact: Linda Freedman, Educational Prods, 7412 SW Beaverton Hillsdale Hwy, Portland, OR 97225; (800) 950-4949.

ALTERNATIVE FILMWORKS, experimental film distributor seeks ind. film/video works, any length. No mainstream films. Send videotape copy to: Alternative Filmworks, Dept. IC, 259 Oakwood Ave., State College, PA 16803-1698; (814) 867-1528; fax: 9488.

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Each entry in the Classifieds column has a 250-character limit & costs $25 per issue. Ads exceeding this length will be edited. Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified must be typed, double-spaced & worded exactly as it should appear. Deadlines are the 8th of each mo., two mos prior to the cover date (e.g. October 8 for the December issue). Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012.

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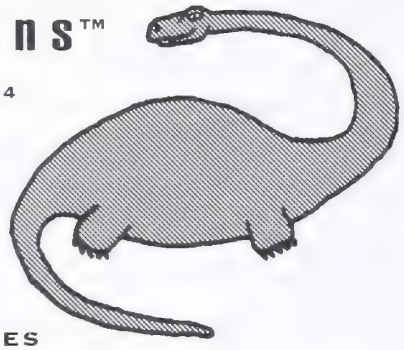
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Preproduction

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SCRIPTS WANTED by ind. film prod. company. All lengths & genres. Shakalaka Films, PO Box 187 Prince Station, NY, NY10012.

FEATURE LENGTH WESTERN SCRIPTS sought by ind. prod. company for development. Picto Cinema Productions, PO Box 7183, Aspen CO 81612.

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR looking for original script or story. All genres, mainly interested in contemporary drama & comedy. Please send material to: D. Benvenisti, 142 West End Ave., 20T, NY, NY 10023.

CREW FOR ROBERTO MONTICELLO'S feature film, *Even Tan*, sequel to 1989 award-winning *Kiki La Toilette*, dealing w/ activists, adventurers & relationships. Union/ non-union. Info to: Ms. Lisa Davis, Roberto Monticello Prods, PO Box 372, NY, NY 10014.

SCRIPTS for 3-picture deal for European distribution (pay cable release in US). No gratuitous sex/violence. Also co-screenwriters for TV series on exploitation of human rights. Mail synopsis only to: Ms. Sheila Daniels, Roberto Monticello Prods, PO Box 372, NY, NY 10014.

PRODUCTION COMPANY seeks scripts for features & docs. Call (201) 222-1971.

STORY & SCRIPT DEVELOPMENT: For more meaningful stories, call mythology & script consultant Geoffrey Hill, author of *Illuminating Shadows: The Mythic Power of Film*. Featured on BBC, E! & NPR. From initial idea to finished screenplay. (310) 271-7779.

Postproduction

EXPERIENCED FREELANCE ONLINE EDITOR needed. Must have knowledge of GVC switcher, Calaway/CMX editor, Abekas AS1, Abekas A72, Beta SP & D-2. Ask for Haroun or Caleb. Videogenix (212) 925-0445.

EDIT YOUR FILM OR MAKE YOUR REEL FOR LESS! Offline video editing at 21st St. & 5th Ave.: Well-maintained 3/4" & video edit system, CD & cassette w/ mixer, T.C. generator, fax, phone, 24 hrs, $125/day, $575/week. Hourly rates. Red Barn Films: (212) 982-6900.

AVID EDITOR. Looking to increase experience & expand reel. Will work on projects in 4.5 & 5.0 software for no fee. Call Ken at (212) 534-6884.

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MUSIC NEEDED: Producer seeks music of all kinds: rock, jazz, classical, etc., for use in ind. film about art theft & forgery. Send demo to: Wortzel, 4 Beatrice Rd, Westford, MA 01886.

3/4" SONY OFF-LINE editing system delivered to you installed: $500/wk., $1600/mo. 5850, 5800, RM440. 2 monitors. Or edit in my space. 30th & 8th Ave. Betacam SP Sony BVP70/BVV5 3 chip prod. package. Tom (212) 279-7003.

ON-LINE/OFF-LINE: A/B roll, Hi-8, Betacam, 3/4" SP editing & transfers w/ CMX compatible Amilink controller. Also Toaster 2.0 switcher, character generator, digital effects, & paintbox. Expert staff, low rates; (212) 246-1517.

BILL CRESTON MEDIA expanding to video editing, computer & photo service. Taking over for Adaptors, Inc. Low rates. VHS, 3/4", Interformat, S-8 film, SEG, Amiga, titling, sound. Grants/discounts avail. 727 6th Ave., NY, NY 10010; (212) 924-2893.

16MM CUTTING ROOMS: 8-plate & 6-plate fully equipped rooms, sound transfer facilities, 24-hour access. Downtown, near all subways & Canal St. Reasonable rates. (212) 925-1500.

COZY & CHEAP, Sony 3/4" off-line system for only $450/week. W. 57th St. location. Call Jane (212) 929-4795 or Deborah (212) 226-2579.

BRODSKY & TREADWAY: S-8 & regular 8mm film-to-video masters, scene-by-scene to 1" & Betacam. By appointment only. (508) 948-7985.

16MM EDITING ROOM & office space for rent in suite of inds. Fully equipped w/ 6-plate Steenbeck & 24-hr access. All windowed & new carpet. Located at W. 24th St. & 7th Ave. Reasonable rates. Call Jeff at Film Partners (212) 366-5101.

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Conferences ▪ Seminars

INSIDE THE MOVIE INDUSTRY, a seminar on how to succeed in the movie business todayconducted by attorney/writer Mark Litwak, will be held at the New School in Manhattan on October 22 & 23. Advance registration is required & there is a $180 fee for the seminar. To register, call (212) 229-5690.

Films ▪ Tapes Wanted

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: have you produced a film, video or videodisc on the visual arts? Send information to the Program for Art on Film Database, a computer index to over 19,000 prods on the visual arts. We are interested in prods on all visual arts topics & would welcome information on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film Database, Program for Art on Film, 980 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10021; fax: (212) 628-8963.

BAD TWIN, NY-based prod./exhibition collective, seeks films under 30 min. for ongoing programs in Europe & US. Alternative approaches to all genres & forms welcome. Must have finished 16mm prints avail. Submit VHS only for preview; incl. SASE for return. Contact: Bad Twin, Box 528, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable TV System, seeks works by ind. video & filmmakers for access airing. BRONXNET produces programs & facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about the Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, (718) 960-1180.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video art interstitials to play btwn alternative music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTER FOR NEW TV (CNTV) seeks 3/4", VHS or Hi8 work for cable access show. Contact: CNTV, 1440 N. Dayton St., Chicago, IL 60622.

CENTRAL AMERICAN NEWS PROJECT seeks individuals to produce news & public affairs pieces for monthly access show on Central America. Contribute footage or contacts w/ people in CA w/ film or video equip. No payment. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St., Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Contact: Cine Acción, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks works on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Laura Greenfield, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (213) 458-8590.

COMEDY CENTRAL seeks comedic student/ind. films & videos up to 3 min. to air on its flagship program, Short Attention Span Theater. Must have broadcast rights. No fees. Submit VHS or 3/4" tapes to: Josh Lebowitz, HBO Downtown Prods, 120 E. 23rd St., 6th fl., NY, NY 10010; (212) 512-8851.

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length. Deadlines for Notices will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., October 8 for the December issue). Send to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, NY, NY 10012.

CSIF $100 FILM FESTIVAL seeks S-8 films made for less than $100. Winning entries screened & included in touring film program. Contact: $100 Film Festival, Calgary Society of Independent Filmmakers, PO Box 30089, Station B, Calgary, AB, T2M 4N7, Canada. Deadline: March 1, 1994.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info., contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" Beta & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Tanya Steele, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Please contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Ronhert Park, CA 94928.

ESSENTIAL CINEMA GROUP is continually accepting works for its Ind. Short Cinema bimonthly film series. 16/35mm short films, 30 min. max. Seeking new experimental, narrative, doc & animation. Send preview tapes on VHS (NTSC, PAL) w/ return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 118 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101. For more info on ECG please write: 2011 Fifth Ave., #301, Seattle, WA 98121-2502 or (206) 441-6181.

FEM TV (Feminist TV), award-winning cable access show in Houston, seeks short videos by/about/for women (3/4" preferred). Videos credited. Tapes returned. Please mail to: Fem TV, PO Box 66604 Houston, TX 77266-6604.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on varied subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, Ste 4768, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, NY, NY 10112.

FILMS/VIDEOS WANTED. Shorts under 10 min. for Dyke TV, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-935 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

FULL HOUSE, a night of movies. Monthly fest of short films to screen at 5 cafés from East Village to Saratoga (stops incl. Brooklyn & Albany). Must be avail. on 16mm w/ optical sound. Preview on 16mm or VHS. Send film/tape w/ SASE to: Jack of Hearts Productions, Attn: Michael Ellenbogen, 42 N. Allen St., Albany, NY 12203; (518) 489-2037. If you would like your film to be considered for first annual Full House Extravaganza in NYC March 1994, send $10 fee & be aware film will be needed until April 94.

GREEN COMMUNICATIONS seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Send tape to: 1437 7th St., Ste. 305, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (301) 576-6680.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about the Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film & videomakers which deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. are strongly encouraged. Send tapes in Beta, 3/4", or VHS format to: La Plaza/Aquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

LOOKING FOR 30 min. docs or dramas about teen or child who leaves home due to problems w/ family or society. Should show kids and parents need each other & are willing to fight to stay together. Target group: 8-12 yrs. & parents. Will be American entry for int'l series of 8 programs to focus on UN's International Year of the Family, 1994. Send written description of film (1-pg.) to Andrea Traubner, Thirteen/WNET, 356 W. 58th St., NY, NY 10019.

LOS ANGELES CONTEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS (LACE) seeks recently completed video art, experimental docs & other innovative video works for ongoing screening program. Send 3/4" or 1/2" tape, description, resumé & SASE to: Tom Dennison, performance & video coordinator, LACE, 1804 Industrial St., Los Angeles, CA 90021; (213) 624-5650.

NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across the US. We are looking for political, entertainment, & PSAs in super VHS or VHS. Send to NyTex Productions, PO Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn: Don Cevaro.

OLD & NEW MASTERS OF SUPER-8, an invitational fest in 5th yr at Anthology Film Archives, is expanding its reference file of dedicated S-8 filmmakers w/ at least 2 completed films of any length in S-8, who have prints (not just originals) & wish to be considered for this yr's fest & other upcoming S-8 programming. Fest has travelled to Brussels & may reach Vienna, Berlin, Budapest, Tours, Paris, etc., in 1993-4. Send VHS preview transfer of S-8 films w/ SASE return mailer, self-addressed stamped postcard & $5 w/ file folder of support materials: 50-word bio, resumé, S-8 filmography, stills (labeled on back), photo of yourself (w/ name, address, phone), description of films (duration, fps, sound/silent, color/b&w, yr). Photo stills, etc. are for catalogs. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Barbara Rosenthal, guest curator, Old & New Masters of Super-8, 727 Ave. of the Americas, NY, NY 10010.

OPEN CITY cable series invites indivs., groups & orgs to submit proposals to produce new cable programming, to air as part of *Artwaves*, Hallwalls Contemporary Art Centers' weekly cable access program. Provides honoraria, prod. & postprod. facilities & technical assistance for indivs to produce programming of interest to diverse urban & rural communities in Western NY. Submissions should incl. 1-pg. project description, timeframe for prod. & postprod. & applicant's technical experience. Three projects will be selected. Applicants

must be residents of Erie, Niagara, Allegheny, Cattaragus, or Chautauqua counties. Student projects not eligible. Contact: Hallwalls Contemporary Art Center, 700 Main St., Buffalo, NY 14202; (716) 854-5828.

ORGONE CINEMA, newly formed group, looking for films/videos for possible exhibition in Pittsburgh area. Prefer VHS for preview. Especially interested in regular 8, S-8 & 16mm. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, c/o M. Johnson, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PACIFIC ARTS seeks selected domestic & foreign ind. projects—narrative, animation, doc, experimental & performance—to air on wkly cable access show. Any theme, any length. Projects credited. Submit 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Pacific Arts, PO Box 533, Farmington, MI 48332-0533.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests non-commercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, PO Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

REEL TIME, monthly film series at Performance Space 122 in Manhattan, seeks short (under 45 min.) independent films/videos. Submit VHS preview copy to: Caroline Koebel, c/o Reel Time, PS 122, 150 1st Ave, NY, NY 10000; 212/477-5829 (X327).

SOUTHERN CIRCUIT 1994-95, tour of 6 artists who each travel 10 days to 8 southern sites & present 1 show/city, seeks film/video artists. No appl. form. Interested artists should submit VHS, 3/4" or 16mm film program approx. 1- hr. long (can be cued for 30 min. section for judging purposes) w/resumé & publicity. Following prescreening process, artists selected from 40 finalists by panel in April '94. Demands of tour & variety of venues make performance art generally inappropriate. Deadline: Jan. 17, 1994. Send materials to: South Carolina Arts Commission, Media Arts Center, 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201. Attn: Felicia Smith or Susan Leonard; (803) 734-8696.

STONEPINE PRODS seeks submissions of quality, full-length scripts. All genres considered. Contact: 10 Universal City Plaza, Ste. 1077A, Universal City, CA 91608-1097; (818) 505-3500.

TV 2000. TV pilot seeks new videos that convey positive images for teens. All genres (art, music & film on video). Send letter of permission to air materials & video to: Daryl Grant, Box 627, Ansonia Station, NY, NY 10023.

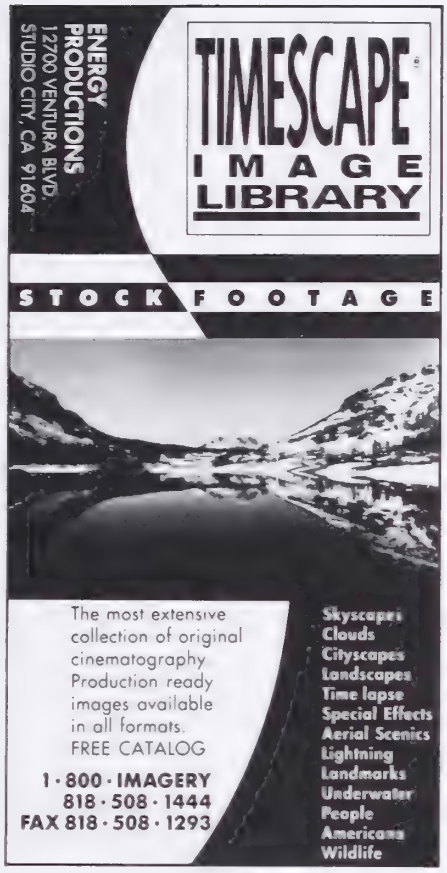
VIRTUAL FOCUS seeks submissions of doc, narrative & art videos for monthly public screenings. Send VHS copies to: Virtual Focus, 6019 Sunset Blvd., Ste 133, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 250-8118.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for wkly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

Opportunities ▪ Gigs

FILM/VIDEO ARTS, INC., nonprofit media arts center in NYC, seeks interns in the areas of development &



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Deadline for receipt of applications is Friday, November 5, 5 p.m.

For application and complete info, send SASE with request to:
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equipment rental. Interns are required to work 15 hrs./wk for a minimum of 6 mos. All internships are unpaid. However, interns receive free access on standby basis to FVA's equipment, facilities, courses & workshops. Responsibilities for the development internship incl. updating mailing list, sending thank-you letters & newsletters to new members, assisting in newsletter prod. coordinating screenings & events. Requires computer knowledge, organizational skills, good writing skills, familiarity w/ film/video. Contact: Duane Butler or Alice Martin, (212) 673-9361. For equipment rental internship, will assemble film/video equipment pkgs; test operation & condition of 16mm cameras, professional camcorders, audio recorders, lights, tripods, mics, etc.; check in/out equipment & test returned equipment. Must have familiarity w/ equipment & good communication skills. Position avail. Monday/Friday or Wednesday/Thursday. Contact: Angie Cohn or Art Jones, (212) 673-9361.

INSIGNIA FILMS has openings for p/t interns on 2 projects. First is 7-part, 10-hr. series (16mm) on history of American West for PBS, scheduled to air in 1996; executive produced by Ken Burns, directed by Stephen Ives. Second is 90-min. PBS special on national tour of Cornerstone Theater Co.'s production of *The Winter's Tale*. Project in postproduction. Interns needed to transfer footage on 3/4" editing system, using Mac computer controller. Pays $10/day. Contact Sarah at (212) 274-0096.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for *DYKE TV*, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

Publications

BAY AREA BACKLOT, a new floppy disk directory covering Northern California's motion picture, video, desktop video & multimedia industry has been released by *Film/Tape World*, Northern California's film & video news magazine. It will be avail. on floppy disk for easy access from any Macintosh computer. For more info, call *Film/Tape World* at (415) 543-6189.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES 27th Annual Report is avail. Contains info on Endowment programs & complete listing of endowment grants. Report is free. Send requests to: NEH 1992 Annual Report, Rm. 407, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

WHO FUNDS PTV?, a CPB pamphlet containing listings of public television series, entities, and organizations that provide funding to ind. producers. To obtain a copy of the third edition, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to *Who Funds PTV?*, CPB Publications Office, 901 E Street NW, Washington, D.C. 20004-2037.

Call for Papers

COLLEGE ART ASSOCIATION's annual conference, Feb. 1994, seeks proposals/presentations on ind. video from lesbian & gay mediamakers, scholars, historians & critics. Panels will combine papers, presentations & excerpts from prods, mapping medium's diversity & various roles it has played in lesbian & gay self-representation. Possible themes incl.: how ind. video has (or has not) functioned as bridge between gender, race, ethnicity & class w/in community; ind. lesbian & gay video's distinct relationship w/ institutional art video & queer film; the future of lesbian & gay ind. prod. Submit outlines, proposals, etc., to: Jane Cottis/John Di Stefano, 328 Museum Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90065.

CONSOLE-ING PASSIONS: TELEVISION, VIDEO & FEMINISM, conference hosted by Univ. of Arizona on April 21-24, 1994, needs papers. Conference organizers welcome proposals that address questions of sexual & other cultural differences, incl. feminist perspectives on: ind. video & video art; global issues; geopolitics; cultural & political history; children's media; race, gender, etc. Deadline: October 15. Provide separate proposal for each paper. "Console-ing Passions" requests first consideration to publish accepted papers. Mail or fax 500-word proposals for papers, panels & workshops to: Mary Beth Haralovich, Dept. of Media Arts, 265 Modern Languages Bldg., University of Arizona, Tuscon, AZ 85721; (602) 621-7352, fax: 9662.

JOURNAL OF FILM AND VIDEO seeks manuscripts on: Rethinking Genres; Race & Ethnicity; Film/Video Production; Regional Cinema; The Law; The New Auteurism & essays on topics related to film/video. Send 3 copies of essay (double-spaced, anonymous, MLA style) to: Frank P. Tomasulo, Editor, *Journal of Film and Video*, Dept. of Communication, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA 30303.

NAMAC offers 1992 member directory, up-to-the-min. compilation of resource & contact info relevant to media arts, community, cultural & educational orgs & mediamakers. Incl. descriptions of 132 media arts centers in US & Canada w/ org history, mission, budget, collections, demographics of audiences & artists, facilities, publications, etc. Send check payable to NAMAC ($25 nonmembers/$12 NAMAC members) to: NAMAC, 1212 Broadway, Ste. 816, Oakland, CA 94612.

SEA'94, 5th annual int'l symposium on electronic art will be held in Helsinki, Finland, Aug. 23 - 28, 1994. Submissions on topics such as Spacescapes: Configurations of Space & Landscape in the Electronic Arts; High & Low Cultural Histories of Technology; The Pedagogical Challenges of Electronic Media. Deadline for papers & panels: Jan. 2, 1994. Proposals for papers should be be sent w/ ISEA entry form to: Secretary General, Ms. Kristina Andersson, University of Art & Design Helsinki, UIAH Centre for Advanced Studies, Hameentie 135 C, 00560 Helsinki Finland. Send appl. request to above address or call 358-0-756-3344.

THE VELVET LIGHT TRAP seeks papers for issue devoted to representations of historical events & stories straight from headlines as they become narratives in film & TV—from Ken Burns's *The Civil War* to the Amy Fisher saga to Spike Lee's *Malcolm X*. Deadline: Dec. 1, 1993. Send 3 copies of manuscripts in MLA style & publishable form to: *The Velvet Light Trap*, Dept. of Radio/TV/Film, CMA 6.118, University of Texas, Austin, TX 78712.

Resources • Funds

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE administers for the National Endowment for the Arts a program of grants for ind. media artists whose work shows exceptional promise & who have demonstrated a commitment to the art of the moving image. Highly competitive; limited grants. Previous recipients may not reapply. Grants range from $10,000 to $20,000. Appls. judged on basis of creativity of proposed project & artistic merit &

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6 Benefits of Membership

THE INDEPENDENT

Membership provides you with a year's subscription to *The Independent*. Published 10 times a year, each issue of the magazine includes festival listings, funding deadlines, exhibition venues, and more. Plus, you'll find thought-provoking features, news, and regular columns on business, technical, and legal matters.

THE FESTIVAL BUREAU

AIVF maintains up-to-date information on over 650 national and international festivals, and can help you determine which are right for your film or video.

Liaison Service

AIVF works directly with many foreign festivals, in some cases collecting and shipping tapes or prints overseas, in other cases serving as the U.S. host to visiting festival directors.

Tape Library

Members can house copies of their work in the AIVF tape library for screening by visiting festival programmers. Or make your own special screening arrangements with AIVF.

INFORMATION SERVICES

Distribution

In person or over the phone, AIVF can provide information about distributors.

AIVF's Member Library

Our library houses information on everything from distributors to sample contracts to budgets.

SEMINARS

Our seminars explore business, aesthetic, legal, and technical topics.

BOOKS AND TAPES

AIVF has a large mail order catalog of media books, and publishes our own titles on festivals, distribution, and foreign production resources.

ADVOCACY

Whether it's freedom of expression, public funding, public TV, contractual agreements, cable legislation, or other issues that affect independents, AIVF is there working for you.

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- ❑ $75/library
- ❑ $100/nonprofit organization
- ❑ $150/business & industry
- ❑ Add $18 for 1st class mailing

Foreign Surface Rates
(Outside North America)

- ❑ $40/student (enclose copy of student ID)
- ❑ $60/individual
- ❑ $90/library
- ❑ $115/nonprofit organization
- ❑ $165/business & industry
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technical quality of sample work. For info & deadline, contact: American Film Institute, PO Box 27999, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027. (213) 856-7600.

CHANGE, INC. assists artists of all disciplines w/ emergency aid to avoid eviction or cover medical expenses, unpaid utility bills, fire damage or other emergencies. Grants range from $100 to $500. Send letter describing financial emergency, copies of bills or eviction notice, resumé, announcements of exhibitions, work sample & at least 2 letters of recommendation from field. For info, write: Change, Inc., PO Box 705, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276; (212) 473-3742.

CREATIVE SCREENWRITERS GROUP, national organization dedicated to advancement of writing, is launching free service for everyone interested in improving writing skills. CSG will provide assistance to anyone interested in joining writers' group in his/her community. CSG also provides info on how to form new groups. Send name, address & phone w/ description of writing interests & SASE to: Creative Screenwriters Group, 518 Ninth St., NE, Ste. 308, Washington, DC 20002.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS announces grants for film/video prod. Before applying, artists generally have history of support & critical recognition for their media work at the state, regional or national level. Eligibility: Artists applying as individuals or through orgs may submit only one appl. in cat. Previous grantees will not be considered for same project unless applicant submits evidence that substantial portion has been completed w/ previous grant. Grants are generally for prod. of single film/video projects that exemplify use of these media as art forms. All phases of project are eligible for support. Matching grants to organizations range from $20,000 to $75,000. Nonmatching grants to individuals range from $10,000 to $35,000. A grant period of more than 1 yr is allowed. Appl. package must incl. film/video sample that is work of person w/ primary artistic responsibility for project; 3 copies of Production Supplementary Information Sheet; 2 copies of screenplay or story treatment; 1 copy of statement concerning clearance of rights; 1 copy of signed statements by major participants verifying involvement in project; for previous grantees, 1 copy of Interim Report. Films must be 16mm or S-8. Videos must be Hi8, VHS or 3/4". Laser discs may be Level 1 or 2. Deadline: Oct. 29. Notification after June 1994. For appl., write Media Arts Program, Rm. 720, NEA, Nancy Hanks Center, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506-0001; (202) 682-5452.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES (NEH) offers study grants for humanities teachers w/ heavy teaching loads & limited opportunities for professional development. The $3,000 grants provide 6 wks of support during the summer 1994 undertake f/t humanities study. For appl. or guidelines, contact: NEH Study Grants, Rm 316, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8463.

THE PAUL ROBESON FUND FOR INDEPENDENT MEDIA, a project of the Funding Exchange, is requesting proposals from ind. film, video & radio producers for the Fund's 1993/1994 funding cycle. The fund is open to all producers of social issue media. Film & video proposals may be doc, narrative, experimental, or animation. Radio projects may be a pilot, special, limited series or series of modules. Deadline: Dec. 1. Appls. & guidelines may be obtained by calling or writing the Funding Exchange,

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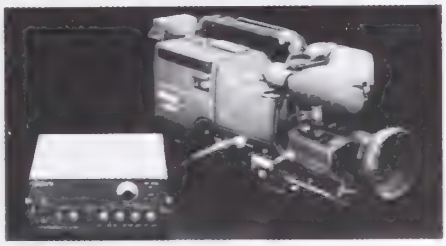
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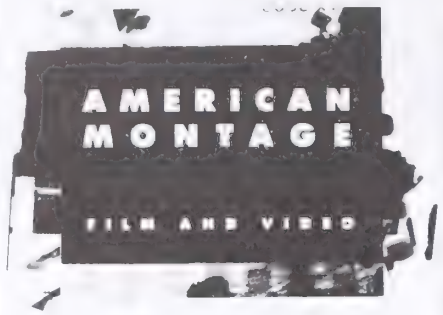


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$60,000 SCREENPLAY COMPETITION. Conquest Media is seeking producable film scripts from 60 to 130 pgs. Competition awards up to 3 $20,000 grants for scripts chosen. Deadline: Feb. 1, 1994. For rules & info, send SASE to Conquest Media Screenplay Competition, Box 694, Huntsville, AL 35804.

UCROSS FOUNDATION offers artists 2- to 8-wk. residencies at foot of Big Horn Mts in Wyoming. Appls welcome from artists in all disciplines (visual, literary, film/video, music, scholarly). Deadline: March 1 for August-December session. Room, board & studio space provided free of charge. For appl, contact: Executive director, Ucross Foundation, 2836 US Hwy 1416 East, Clearmont, Wyoming 82835; (307) 737-2291.

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Continued from page 27

able to schedule two gigs a week at $200 per gig for 30 weeks every year would gross $12,000, and that's assuming the hosts always paid for transportation. This $12,000 would require psychic energy for considerable travel, as well as for meeting and interacting with new and different audiences each week. Of course, since independent film is useful precisely because it poses challenges to viewers weaned on conventional popular film and TV, audience response is predictably mixed, and sometimes hostile. For a young filmmaker making his or her first tour, such experiences can be invigorating; but as years go by, the process is more wearing—though most filmmakers remain committed to it, both in the interest of their films and in the interest of helping to service and maintain at least some audience for independent cinema.

I believe in paying as many independent filmmakers as much as I can find for them. I don't believe in paying *any* filmmaker who must travel several hours to a gig less than $300, plus transportation; when a filmmaker's reputation allows it, I do my best either to pay more or to coordinate additional gigs, or both. When I can, I pay rentals for the films screened, in addition to the fee (this is often an easy way of enhancing what a filmmaker takes away from a gig—easy, because in most academic institutions, audio-visual offices and their rental budgets are quite separate from academic departments). Of course, when I am able to collaborate with others at local colleges and arts organizations, it's often possible to offer a filmmaker much more. Recently, William Greaves presented his *Symbiopsychotaxiplasm: Take One* and other work and talked with classes over a four-day period at Colgate University, Hamilton College, Utica College, and the Munson-Williams-Proctor Institute in Utica. We were able to pay Greaves $2,500—a considerable fee for an independent filmmaker, but certainly a legitimate one for a person of Greaves' long-term contributions to the field.

One way I've been able to bring costs down has been to house visiting filmmakers with me. I'm fortunate to have the space to do this and would not do it if I could only offer a winter guest an unheated room, as one "host" I'm aware of has done. Of course, sometimes a filmmaker would rather stay in a hotel/motel. But even this cost can be controlled: many filmmakers would prefer a bed and breakfast to the more expensive local Hilton.

Now that public arts funding organizations are more financially stressed, it's time for those of us with the necessary resources to step up, in the interest of maintaining the vitality of film history. It's time that the various traditions of alternative cinema are "curricularized," that they begin to receive the same ongoing support from within the academic community as the popular cinema has always received. Surely if we can continue to support the Industry, we can do more to support those filmmakers who put their financial lives on the line to provide us with cinematic texts we can use to recontextualize and expose the problematics of the popular cinema and the ideologies it encodes.

Scott MacDonald is working on A Critical Cinema 3, *part of an on-going series of interviews with independent filmmakers, published by the University of California Press. His* Avant-Garde Film/Motion Studies *(Cambridge Univ. Press) appeared earlier this year.*

Distribution Sources: *The Act of Seeing with One's Own Eyes*: Canyon Cinema (CC), 2325 Third St., Ste. 338, San Francisco, CA 94107; *Fog Line*: Film-Makers Cooperative (FMC), 175 Lexington Ave., NY, NY 10016; *Fuses*: CC; Barbara Hammer's films: CC; *Horizons*: Gottheim, 33 Orton St., Binghamton, NY 13901; *Intimate Stranger*: Museum of Modern Art (MoMA); *In Titan's Goblet*: CC; *Landscape*: CC; *Passage à l'acte*: MoMA; *Pièce Touchée*: MoMA; *Poetic Justice*: FMC; *Privilege*: Zeitgeist, 247 Centre St., 2nd fl., NY, NY 10013; Riggs' videotapes: Frameline, Box 14792, San Francisco, CA 94114; *Scanning* and other Porter films: Porter, 11 Dunbar Road, Toronto, Ontario M4W 2X5, Canada; *Sink or Swim*: Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10012; *Sky Blue Water Light Sign*: CC; *Symbiopsychotaxiplasm: Take One*: Greaves, 230 W. 55th St., NY, NY 10019; *Two Wrenching Departures*: Jacobs, 94 Chambers St., NY, NY 10007; *Who Killed Vincent Chin?*: Filmmakers' Library, 124 E. 40th St., Ste. 901, New York, NY 10016.

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DENTAL INSURANCE UPDATE

The dental plan available to our members in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania has been expanded. There is now a greater choice of dental care providers, ranging from oral surgeons to holistic dentists. Those who are enrolled or are thinking of enrolling in the Northeast Dental Plan of America can call AIVF at (212) 473-3400 for more information, or contact Tom Deremer directly at the Northeast Dental Plan (800) 637-5537.

FIVF THREE-YEAR PLAN AVAILABLE

Want to see into FIVF's future? The foundation has just completed its three-year plan for the National Endowment for the Arts Advancement Grant. Copies are available to members for $9.00 (the cost of copying and mailing). The plan was developed over the past year with input from members, staff, the board, and colleague organizations in the media field. Contact our office at (212) 473-3400 to order your copy.

NEH GOES ON-LINE

The National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) is now on the BITNET electronic mail system. It can now receive and process requests from individuals and institutions for publications and application information. To get on-line, contact either Joy Evans or Suzanne Volpe at NEHOPA@GWUVM with requests. Also, those with access to an electronic mail system should forward an electronic address as well. Through e-mail, the NEH will send information about NEH programs, deadlines, and new publications. Other offices at the NEH can be reached using the following BITNET access codes: Public Programs Division (NEHPUB@GWUVM); Fellowships and Seminars (NEHFELL@GWUVM); and Grants Office (NEHGRANT@GWUVM).

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MEMBERABILIA

Congratulations to longtime AIVF member and 10-year board president Robert Richter on his twenty-fifth year as an independent documentary producer and on his recent selection to the board of the **International Documentary Association**. Two of Richter's recent productions, *The Money Lenders* and *Ben Sprock Baby Doctor*, are slated to air on TBS sometime in 1993.

A hearty high five to the Massachusetts producer/director team of Charles Light and Daniel Keller whose documentary *No Success Like Failure*, about underground press in the 1960's, has been awarded a grant from the **New York Council for the Humanities**. High fives as well to our San Francisco Bay Area members who received **Film Arts Foundation** grants: Angela D. Chou received a grant to pursue her short experimental work; Tehimina Khan and Lisanne Skyler for the development of new projects; and Vicki Funari for completion and distribution funds. Also in the Grant Pack: writer/director Demetria Royals of Brooklyn was awarded a grant from the **Jerome Foundation** for her proposed videowall installation *Inventing Herself*.

The National Endowment for the Arts and **Arts International** (a division of the Institute of International Education) has awarded travel grants of $2,100 and $1,350 to NYC filmmaker Peter C. Wang and Atlanta member Gayla Jamison to conduct indigenous research for their respective projects on China and Guatemala. Veteran New York filmmaker St. Clair Bourne received a 1993 fellowship to the **MacDowell Colony** in Petersborough, New Hampshire.

Six artists have been selected for the 1993-94 **South Carolina Arts Commission's Southern Circuit Tour** of independent filmmakers. Works by AIVF members included on the tour are: Jonathan Berman's *The Shvitz*, Jeanne C. Finley's *A.R.M. to Moscow*, Ellen Spiro's *Greetings From Out There*, as well as Marco Williams' In *Search of Our Fathers*. The tour runs through April 1994.

Bill Armstrong Productions was awarded **The 1993 CINE Golden Eagle** for the documentary *Buffalo Soldiers*, about Black US Cavalry on the western frontier, which originally was broadcast on A&E. The film is now eligible for an Academy Award nomination as well.

Robert Schmidt has won two festival awards for his 25-minute narrative, *Saturn*: the Young Directors Award from the **Kobe International Short Film Festival** and Best Narrative at the **Sinking Creek Film Festival**.

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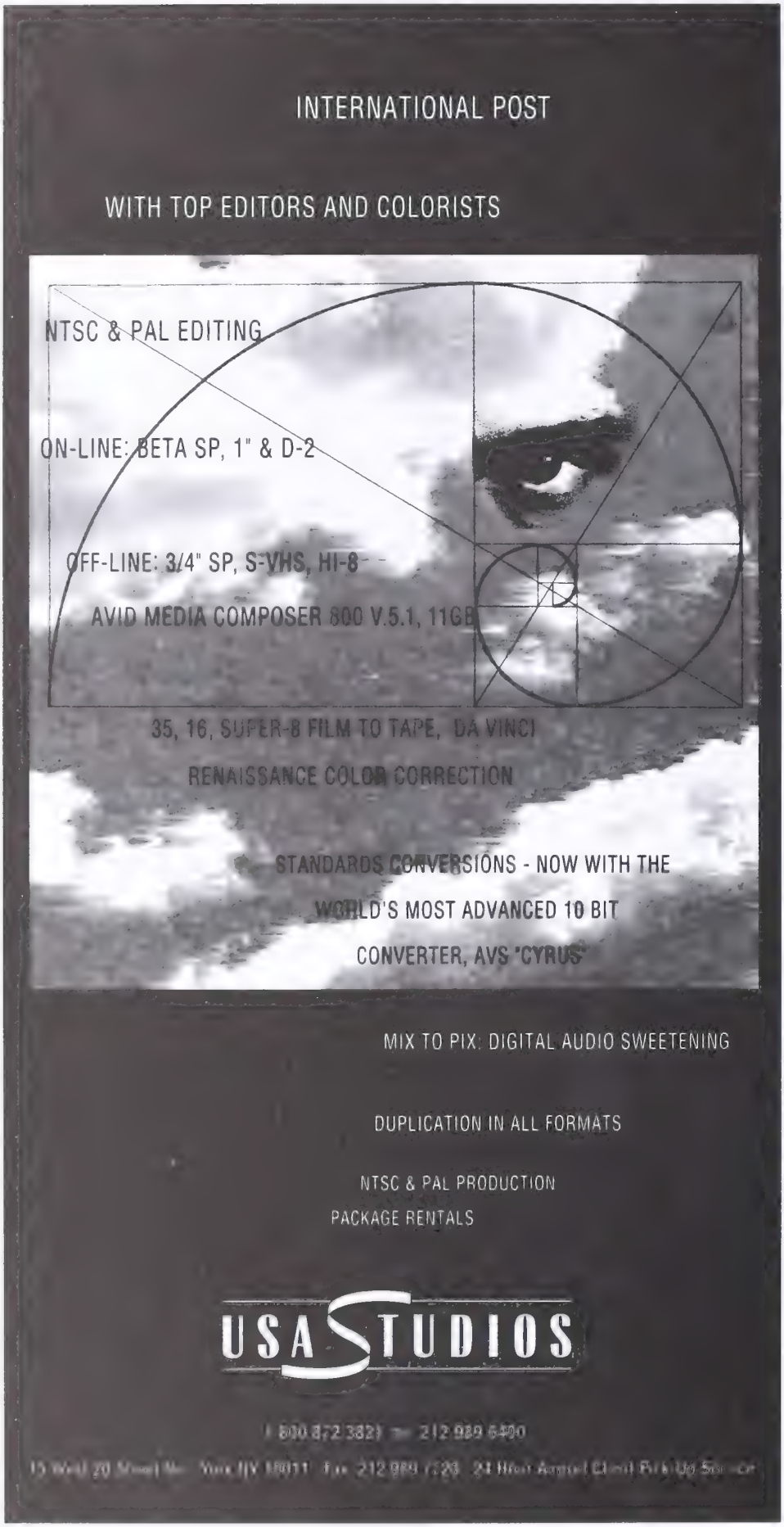
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COVER: While most American cineastes are familiar with the masters of Japanese film—Ozu, Kurosawa, Mizoguchi, etc.—few are aware of Japan's independent film- and videomakers, such as Tsuchimoto Noriaki, director of the documentary *Minamata: The Victims and Their World* (pictured). In "Made in Japan," Scott Sinkler looks at their work, their aesthetics, and their support structures. Also in this issue: The South is more than a back lot for Hollywood; it's home to numerous independents, who are churning out an abundance of features, documentaries, music videos, and experimental work from southern Florida to North Carolina. Steve Dollar checks it out and discovers some connecting links. Cover photo courtesy Scott Sinkler.

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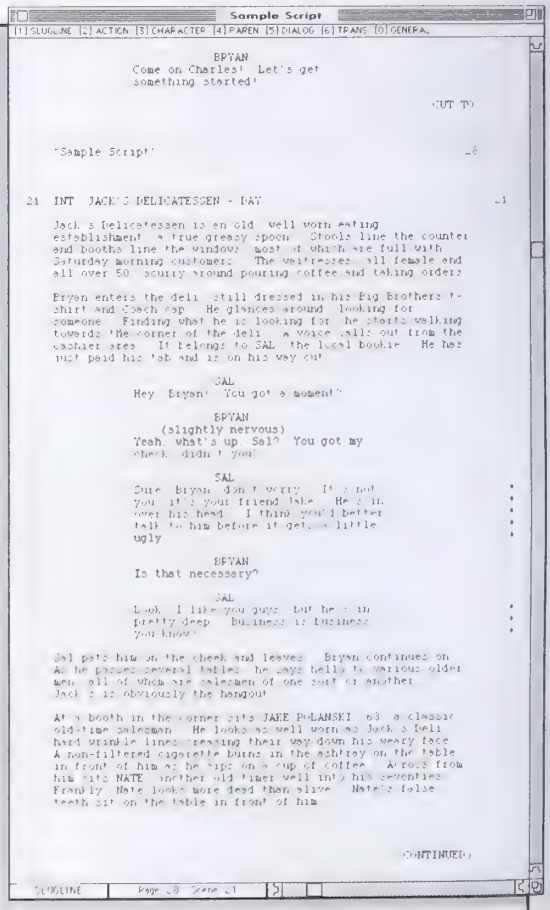
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THE BIG CHILL

Film in the Cities' Shutdown Bleakens Outlook for Media Arts Centers



Minnesota filmmakers like Bill Simonett and cameraman Roger Schmitz, here shooting *Fare Game*, a documentary on pay-by-the-bird hunting preserves, are mourning the loss of Film in the Cities. The media arts center was the only facility to provide access to film production and postproduction equipment in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area.

Courtesy filmmaker

Just one month shy of its 23rd birthday, St. Paul, Minnesota-based Film in the Cities (FITC) announced it would not make it to 24. The media arts center, which offered education, artist grants and fellowships, and low cost access to film and photography equipment, recently elected to dissolve, with the intent of transferring its programs and services to other existing local organizations.

The decision came in response to growing financial concerns over an operating deficit on the rise since 1987, and a recent announcement by the Minnesota State Arts Board that its annual funding for FITC would be cut from $82,000 to just $15,000. At a July 27 FITC board of directors meeting, the agenda called for discussion of several possible plans of action, including closure. But the final decision was unanticipated.

"When you're working so hard to keep an organization afloat, you're kind of in denial about things," says board chairperson Judith Guest. "Nobody wanted or expected this."

Especially surprised was board member David Madson, who cast the lone vote against dissolution. Madson, whose affiliation with FITC dates back 22 years, wasn't necessarily convinced the decision was wrong; just premature. "It was a hasty decision," he says. "We had been current with all our financial obligations. We were not on the verge of bankruptcy."

FITC had accumulated an operating deficit of about $350,000 by the end of the 1992-93 fiscal year, but $260,000 of that was owed to its own capital reserve fund. That left the organization's only significant debt to the city of St. Paul in the form of a $73,000 interest-free loan, half of which required no payments until 1999. Still, the depleted cash reserve and severe drop in funding painted a bleak picture of FITC's future in the eyes of other board members, including Guest. "We were starting to have cash flow problems,"

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she says. "When you are worrying every week about whether you are going to make payroll, it's bad." Also, no legitimate deficit reduction plan existed, she explains, a fact that concerned funders and indicated FITC would continue to lose financial support.

Shortly before the decision to dissolve, FITC eliminated its photography and film exhibition programs, neither of which was self-supporting. The cuts were meant to streamline the organization and perhaps stabilize its financial state, but they had little effect. The decision to eliminate FITC altogether was actually a plan to save remaining programs from similar fates. By getting rid of operating costs and the liability of outstanding debt, board members hoped current FITC offerings could survive, with funding in tact, under other organizations.

Those organizations could include Independent Feature Project/North, the Screenwriters Workshop, Intermedia Arts, and the Playwrights Center, all local entities that have expressed interest in taking on portions of FITC's former responsibilities. FITC is currently working with funders to establish effective matches.

Low cost equipment access, another FITC service that never paid for itself, may eventually be provided by the Midwest Media Access Center, a new nonprofit organization formed by Steve Westerlund, who managed FITC equipment rental for seven years. Westerlund received a great deal of support in the forms of volunteerism and fundraising cookie sales during a town meeting at FITC's St. Paul headquarters, held shortly after the decision to close was announced.

The September 1 event attracted about 200 people, most of whom were members, students, and other constituents of the organization. Emotions ranging from frustration to furor ran high at the meeting. Facilitators tried to limit discussion about the past and focus on ideas for the future, but the crowd wouldn't have it. Instead, they demanded to find out why such an important decision had come as such a complete surprise. "We should have been part of the process leading up to that final decision," said filmmaker Helen DeMichiel. "We didn't know that this was going on. We weren't apprised of the situation. It makes us very angry."

FITC's executive director Yvette Nieves-Cruz, who supported dissolution despite having been on the job less than six months, understands the feelings expressed at the meeting, but insists no one was kept in the dark about the organization's financial woes. "The issue of the deficit is not new," she says. "Even nationally, people knew there were problems at Film in the Cities. What stopped any of those angry people from approaching a member of the Board and asking for a meeting?"

Few deny the hole FITC's absence will leave in the Twin Cities media arts community. IFP executive director Jane Minton Fors says her organization already feels an increased workload, due

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to numerous inquiries from people looking for services once provided by FITC. Fors is especially concerned about how the loss of FITC will affect new, up-and-coming artists looking for classes and other ways to hone their skills, but she believes the local filmmaking community, which has grown significantly in recent years, will continue to thrive. "You know how when you lose a member of the family, and the rest of the family is more cherished?" she asks. "It sort of renews your appreciation for what's remaining. I think that's what is going to happen to us."

Filmmaker Bill Simonett, whose *Fare Game*, produced with FITC equipment, was recently sold to PBS and several international television markets, agrees. "Maybe they have to close their doors," he says. "But I think it's important that we don't dwell on that too long, and we get something going immediately to continue the vision."

SCOTT BRIGGS

Scott Briggs is an independent writer and video producer in the Twin Cities.

SEATTLE AND NYC MEDIA CENTERS LOOK TO THE FUTURE

Although the Minneapolis arts community mourns the loss of Film in the Cities (see above article), several media centers around the U.S. are looking to broaden their horizons with the help of both private and state-allotted grant money. Seattle's 911 Media Arts Center is currently delving into TV production, while Harvestworks and Film/Video Arts in New York plan to open a multimedia production facility by 1994.

The 911 Media Arts Center received a $10,000 Seattle Arts Commission (SAC) Diverse Works grant and has enlisted video artist/producer Stark Beatty to produce four hour-long episodes of *Live Art*, a new local public access television show by and for local artists and arts professionals. "We need to educate artists about the media," says Robin Reidy, executive director at 911. "Most of them are as technophobic as the next person." The show, following a magazine-style format, will put previously non-media-related artists on the air and allow them behind camera. The aim is to present an inside view of Seattle's arts community, giving the viewer a glimpse of the creative process.

In August, 911 began hosting a series of open forums to attract talent for *Live Art*. Reidy says cards were sent to nearly every artist and organization in town. By September, a core group had formed of video stringers, crew members, idea people, and some video artists with previously completed work. Veteran New York video artist Skip Blumberg attended one meeting in early September, briefing the artists on what he calls "instant TV"—the kind of spontaneous video Beatty and 911 hope to get out of their novice mediamakers. Monday night open screenings for additional participants will continue throughout the year.

The first *Live Art* will air this month, and 911 hopes to complete four shows in a year-and-a-half, says Reidy. That's a relatively relaxed pace for Beatty, a New York expatriate who for 18

Harvestworks, an audio production facility in New York, will be opening a nonprofit multimedia studio, which will offer independents equipment, training, and artists' residencies in multimedia production. Pictured: Carol Parkinson, executive director.

Photo: Rosalie Winard, courtesy Harvestworks



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months produced a monthly, local access talk show in Seattle called *Smart Art Live*. "He had a good track record of getting shows done," says Reidy. Now he will have a chance to produce something more along the lines of video art and be slightly better funded in the process.

With just $10,000 from SAC and about an equivalent amount of in-kind office support from 911, *Live Art* will attempt to stretch its grant to pay for two of the four projected episodes, says Reidy, who is now working on gathering foundation support for the rest. "We were lucky to find a new pot of money with the Seattle Arts Commission," she points out. Early this year, SAC found itself with excess funds from an NEA-funded project, which ended prematurely. A new grant proposal process began, and by June, 911 learned it had won the cash.

In New York, Harvestworks and Film/Video Arts, both of which provide high-end tools to media artists, are sharing a grant to improve their production, presentation, and educational elements. The two separate organizations, located 10 blocks away from each other in downtown Manhattan, have received $75,000 from the Arts Forward Fund, a consortium of 36 foundations formed two years ago to fight the deterioration of city and state arts funding.

The groups have always been chummy, according to Harvestworks' director Carol Parkinson, who says the founder of Harvestworks had previously worked at Film/Video Arts. Now, because of the grant, they will be sharing new facilities, educational programs, and even members. A new multimedia production facility will break ground at Harvestworks, traditionally an audio media facility, by early summer 1994. "The goal will be to produce interactive products, integrating audio, video, and computer," she says. Using Macromind's Director and other software, mediamakers at the facility will be able to bring together animation, video, and still pictures and work in new media such as CD-ROM and CD-1.

Of course, Harvestworks will hang on to its old audio facilities and still use the old formats. "The work can exist on audiotape and videotape also," she says, to create "a segue between the traditional forms of media and the new media." This transition will be made less bumpy with new educational programs. Harvestworks' current Audio for Video Application class will be updated, and Introductory Interactive Multimedia and Interactive Authoring classes will be added.

The grant will also pay for a new video and film presentation space at Film/Video Arts, and joint services and joint memberships are in the works. "We saw the direction of the technology, how the two mediums were converging," says Parkinson. "Once you digitize the image and the sound, you can work on both at the same time on computer.... It's silly to duplicate services. We at least have to talk with one another about how producers work and what they need."

The $75,000 grant will hardly begin to pay for the complete makeover, estimated at $600,000. Parkinson says both centers are formulating a three-year plan to make up the difference. "It's going to be hard," she says, but "the field is changing." Partially merging the two facilities is, in the long run, a necessity for both groups, she notes.

ROBERT KOLKER

Robert Kolker is a news and features reporter for The Westsider *in New York City.*

PLANET CENTRAL, XTV PREP FOR CABLE DEBUTS

With several new cable networks in the works, the proposed switch to 500 channels might be an independent mediamaker's dream. In typical nineties fashion, three different for-profit networks are finding that independent film and video is just as marketable as web fare. And on a slow network night, any one of these upstart channels could find itself with a massive viewership.

Two baby busters plan to launch XTV, an ad-supported channel targeting the twentysomething generation, in late 1994. Using MTV's fast-paced format as its springboard, XTV's programming schedule is mainly devoted to short-form student and independent work. "The channel will be an excellent way for people to communicate," says Otto Khera, an MBA candidate at Arizona State University, who founded the channel with Kirk Kimerer, a master's candidate at ASU's Mass Communication program. Kimerer and Khera envision the channel as a forum for film- and videomakers making informative and entertaining programming outside of the Hollywood system.



Although the channel's programming schedule bears some resemblance to MTV's—XTV will offer its own version of *House of Style* and in-house documentaries on subjects important to its niche—the main difference is XTV's emphasis on marginal film and video. Where MTV devotes blocks of time to music videos, XTV will focus on shorts by students and independent makers. One program, *AX-S*, will keep the independent community informed about festivals, meetings, and other events. *Make-A-Take*, which will be hosted by independent filmmakers, will explore low-budget film- and videomaking methods and tech-

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nology. Another program, *Film Rap*, will include a panel discussion and evaluation—complete with awards of distinction—for the channel's short films of the week. The main chunk of programming, however, consists of one- or two-hour blocks of shorts. XTV will screen short pieces on all film and video formats, including 8mm that is up to par, and also will feature still photography, animation, and graphics. There are future plans to set up a grant-giving foundation for aspiring mediamakers.

Commenting that baby busters have a high level of frustration at not being able to express their political views, Kimera states that he also wants the channel to serve as a forum for the political concerns of his generation. XTV will offer a show called *Don't Point*, an hour-long panel discussion at which young journalists, political analysts, and leaders will talk about political and cultural trends. Kimera and Khera are also considering a talk show called *X-Talk*, which will focus on relevant issues.

On the environmental front, another new network, Planet Central Television out of Los Angeles, will present ecological programming in six-hour blocks on basic cable, repeated four times daily, beginning in late 1994 to early 1995. Dana Saunders, director of program acquisitions for the network, emphasizes that she is looking for material considered too controversial or political for mainstream television. Planet Central is now acquiring cutting edge independently produced shorts, features, and documentaries to fill approximately 20 percent of its programming schedule for the first year, the rest of the channel's series will be developed in-house. A few proposed programs are *Toxic Court*, a People's Court on environmental polluters, a reality show where cameras follow environmental activists called *Warriors*, and a *Star Trek*-type of show called *2050*.

The three proposed shows follow the mainstream definition of environmentalism, but Planet Central plans to feature a diverse programming slate, which will encompass topics such as hands-on environmentalism, business and economic globalization, alternative health, and minority concerns. Howard Besserman, one of the channel's programming executives, says that Planet Central views "environmental" in more complicated terms. "Environmentalism is broader than just nature films," he says. "There is also the global, local, and personal environment." Programming might look at what Besserman calls "attitudinal environments," which might mean the environment of the workplace or home. The different environments anyone experiences on a daily basis "all work together to create the global situation," he says.

Besserman states that many of the staff members are "Hollywood refugees"—people who worked in Tinseltown and were dissatisfied with the values of the mainstream film and television community. Founder Jay Levin, who also founded the independent paper the *LA Weekly*, wants to create a similar type of alternative medium on cable. He seems to be the glue of this project, as his staff sings his praises. "My hat is off to Jay Levin," Besserman says. "He's quite a visionary."

A third channel on the cable horizon is one that former *New York Times* TV critic and *Channels* magazine executive editor Les Brown has begun to develop, which is devoted entirely to documentary work. Although Brown's plans are still sketchy, he envisions the channel as a mini-pay channel with a subscription price of about $24 per year, and will launch "when cable systems start rebuilding." Funding will come from a mix of public and private sources, but he has not yet obtained enough capital to begin securing libraries.

"Documentaries are not usually perceived as popular as entertainment," says Brown. "But a lot of people are very responsive to this kind of programming." He states that although public television does buy some of the quality documentary programs that are produced, there is a vast market of work that remains unseen in this country. "The four British channels still consider documentaries a staple of their programming," he says. Aside from showing current work, Brown is considering devoting one or two nights a week to the art of the documentary, giving viewers the chance to see historical documentaries, "from Lumiere and Robert Flaherty to network producers such as Edward R. Murrow and the independents."

To submit a piece to XTV, write to: IPN-XTV, Film Submissions, 6566 East Cheney Dr., Scottsdale, AZ 85253 for a submission form. Submissions for Planet Central can be sent directly to: Dana Saunders, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central TV, 20178 Rockport Way, Malibu, CA 90265. 1/2" VHS is the preferred format.

WENDY GREENE

Wendy Greene is a freelance writer living in New York City.

BET GAMBLES ON PAY-PER-VIEW

Black Entertainment Television (BET), the nation's first and only black cable television network, has purchased an 80 percent interest in Action Pay-Per-View, a satellite-delivered movie channel based in Santa Monica, California. Action Pay-Per-View, owned by Avalon Communications, reaches approximately 5-million homes and has a large male viewership. Over time BET plans to supplement the existing programming on the 24-hour pay-per-view channel with productions that appeal to black audiences.

While the new BET Action Pay-Per-View network will initially showcase films that were previously released theatrically, BET president and CEO Robert Johnson says of his new cable venture, "Eventually as the subscriber base increases, the network will involve itself in producing quality low-budget films."

According to Craig Muckle, director of public relations at BET, which is available in 35.7 million households, "Currently, the station does not offer financing for coproductions, but we are definitely looking into that possibility for the future. Right now our priority is to begin supplementing Action Pay-Per-View programming as early as fall 1994." Muckle admits that the high cost of film production was the main impetus for BET's decision to go to the pay-per-view route. "There was a time when BET considered coproducing feature films, but the costs were exorbitant. Through pay-per-view we can offset the costs."

Over the years, the lack of Hollywood opportunities open to black filmmakers has left many searching for alternatives. During a recent series of workshops sponsored by Spike Lee and his 40 Acres and a Mule production company, many attendees were resigned to the fact that $5-million-plus budgets are both out of their reach and unrealistic in today's competitive market. Many filmmakers left the series determined to find alternatives to "going Hollywood."

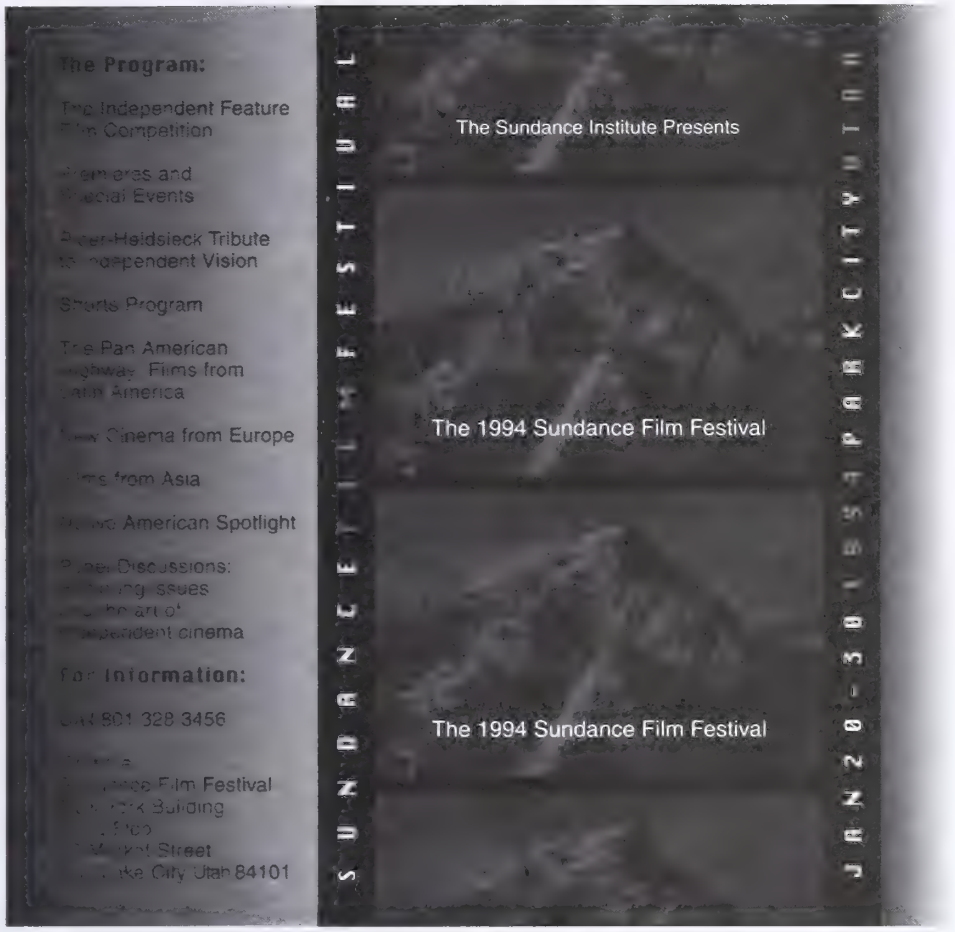
"We want to give the Black creative community the opportunity to present those stories that they wouldn't ordinarily have the chance to tell and the pay-per-view audience is the opportunity to see those films," says Johnson.

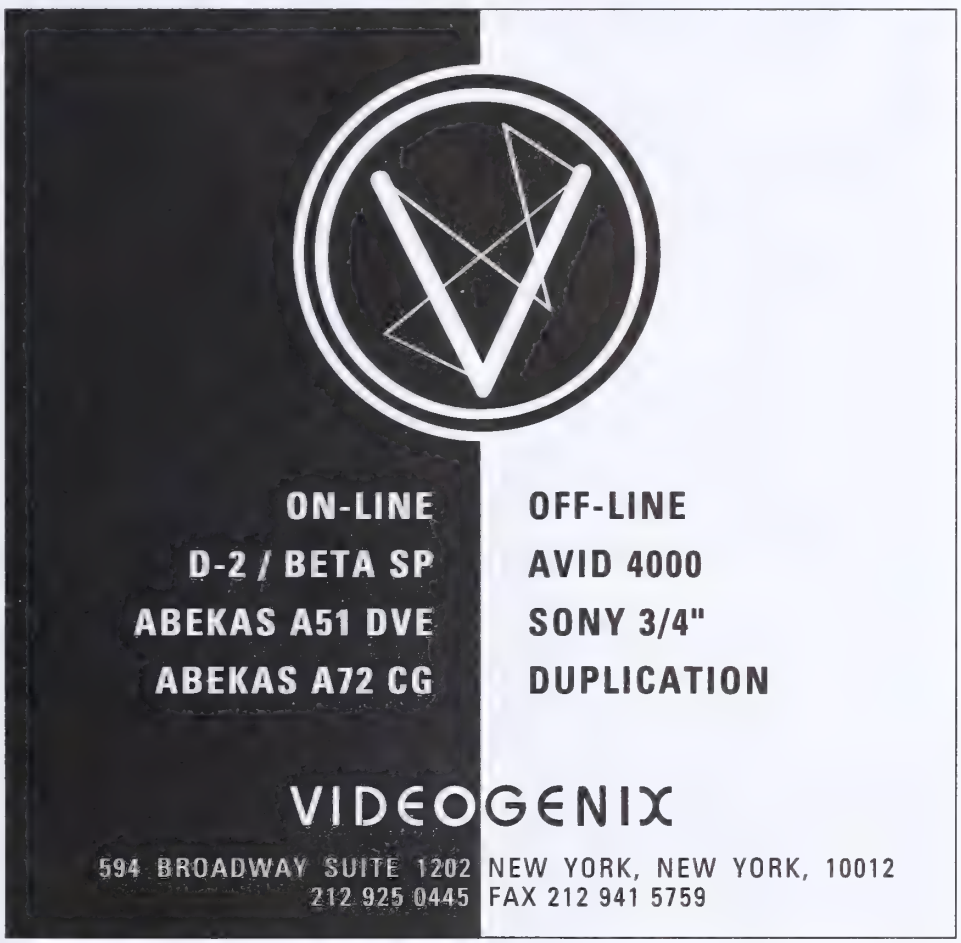
Findings from research conducted for BET shows that, in addition to being interested in action titles, BET's viewers are interested in comedy, dramatic films, and Broadway-style productions, which will increase the potential programming scope for BET Action Pay-Per-View. In addition, the viewers most interested in purchasing pay movies are those between the ages of 18-34, one of BET's largest demographic segments. BET viewers polled said they would be willing to pay up to $4.50 to view a movie on the service.

"Since a significant portion of our target audience is interested in movies, BET and its other media subsidiaries are natural vehicles for cost-effective cross promotion. This new venture also provides us access to the growing interactive part of the cable industry, which is unregulated," Johnson says. "Our penetration into major urban markets and our marketing capability should help increase buy rates and distribution."

KAREN GLOVER

Karen Glover is a music consultant who served as music coordinator for Boomerang, Bebe's Kids, *and* Cell Block 4.





Ellen Spiro

V I D E O M A K E R

Greetings from Out Here



Photo: Bill Stamets, courtesy Video Data Bank

Ellen Spiro's new tape, *Greetings from Out Here*, is a video postcard from the South, billed as a "queer's eye view of a strangely straight (or so we thought) southern universe." Joined by her trusty mutt Sam, Spiro logs a string of visits with rural lesbians and gays.

The one-hour Hi8 diary was funded by the Independent Television Service (ITVS), mandated by Congress to support "innovative programming that involves creative risks" and to target "unserved or underserved audiences." *Greetings from Out Here* was one of the first ITVS Open Call programs out of the gate and offered to public television.

The PBS national network declined to distribute Spiro's queer-year-on-the-road, so on May 31 ITVS offered what's called a "maverick" satellite feed-for-record via the Southern Education Communications Association's satellite link. As of Labor Day, an impressive tally of 85 stations, including 41 in the south, had picked up *Greetings from Out Here* for four plays in three years, says Robyn De Shields, ITVS's director of communications. Seventeen of the top 20 markets have decided to air it.

A native of Richmond, Virginia, and the daughter of a motorcycle-driving rabbi, Spiro went to a high school whose mascot was a Confederate soldier. She fled the south when she realized that she was a lesbian and arrived in New York in 1988, where she helped start DIVA-TV (Damned Interfering Video Activists), which covered ACT-UP actions.

Spiro's best-known tape came about on a foray to South Carolina to protest AIDS quarantine measures. In Columbia, South Carolina, she met a beauty shop operator who passed out safe sex tips to her customers—and subsequently became the subject of Spiro's *DiAna's Hair Ego: AIDS Info Up Front* (1989). This widely shown grassroots primer on community health was praised as "a model for the activist documentary of the 90s" by the *Atlanta Journal & Constitution*.

Spiro opens *Greetings from Out Here* talking about her life in New York. "I became a full-fledged gay activist. Even got arrested a few times—with my camera, of course." (At this point in the tape she puts in footage of a cop's hand covering her camcorder lens.) "There was something funny about this picture. Here I was being an out dyke, and back home [in Virginia] I was still in the closet," she continues. "I started thinking about all those gay people who don't flee, but who stay home and do the bravest thing of all—be who they are where they are."

Spiro captures a remarkable cast in her travelogue, which grew out of an article on country queers that she and *Monk* magazine editor Michael (Monk) Lane coauthored for *The Advocate* in 1992. Among the characters is Monk himself, who appears as an Olympic contender in "fly-fishing for country fags." Also featured is North Carolina novelist Allan Gurganus, who shares a choice recollection of the erotic undercurrents in Baptist worship services. On her travels, Spiro runs across a gay rodeo and, in Austin, a lesbian band called Two Nice Girls, who sing, "We're going to have a happy life. Both of us are going to be the wife."

Unlike *Sherman's March*, Ross McElwee's autobiographical southern odyssey, Spiro omits on-camera cruising—although her trip, like McElwee's, was triggered by a break-up with a girlfriend. *Greetings from Out Here* also differs from *Where Are We? Our Trip Through America*, an 18-day expedition around the south and southwest by Jeffrey Friedman and Rob Epstein, which was part of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's Rediscovering America project. Spiro seems more at home in the south than the two gay San Francisco filmmakers. "It was like being tourists in our own country," they state in their narration. "For us it was unexplored territory." Friedman and Epstein occasionally ask southerners awkward questions like, "What's your image of people from San Francisco?"

Spiro, who got an M.A. in Media Studies at the State University of New York/Buffalo, is now teaching a Queer Film and Video course at Hampshire College. (She decided against the University of Colorado at Boulder: "Why apply for a job in a state where they can openly discriminate against me?") Discovering that her new home, Northhampton, Massachusetts, is known as "Lesbianville, U.S.A.," Spiro plans to make a video on local lavender lore.

In October Spiro screened *Greetings from Out Here* at eight venues on the Southern Circuit, a touring exhibition program of independent film and video. Three years ago Marlon Riggs showed his *Tongues Untied* there, which helped prepare PBS stations in the region for his provocative tape. *Tongues Untied* aired on *P.O.V.* the following year and became the target of anti-gay attacks from conservatives, including presidential candidate Pat Buchanan.

P.O.V. executive producer Ellen Schneider re-

calls. "Some small stations in the South—and elsewhere—had a difficult time deciding whether to air *Tongues Untied*. They took a risk, and some got beat up for it. I sat on the phone with a number of courageous programmers who stuck with it—and paid a price. They'd do it again." Schneider reports that Riggs' tape eventually reached 70 percent of the nation's households with TV sets.

Greetings from Out Here will put some more queer mileage on the map of public television. Wandering the backroads with her handicam and mini-van, Spiro has an itinerary that includes Beaver, Homochitto River, and Gaywood Campground. Despite clutch trouble, PBS is driving towards greater demographic diversity.

BILL STAMETS

Bill Stamets is a freelance writer and super 8 filmmaker in Chicago.

Ross McElwee

DOCUMENTARIAN

Six O'clock News

Ross McElwee stands amid the manicured greenery and ivy-drenched facades of Harvard University's campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where he is acting associate at the university's film study center. Best known for his verité-style documentaries *Sherman's March* (1986) and *Time Indefinite* (1993), McElwee, 46, is a transplanted Southerner—complete with manners and thinning drawl—who seems out of place in the Polo-and-khaki environs.

As we sit in the shadows of a sturdy oak, it feels more like the world of Monet than of McElwee, at least as seen in his quirky slice-of-life documentaries, with their eclectic cast of characters. He begins to discuss the lengthy, sporadic process of filming his ninth documentary, tentatively titled *Six O'clock News*, which has been three years in the making. But then, without warning, the sprinker system goes off, sending us both scrambling for a dry patch of grass. "This would have been a perfect scene in one of my films," comments McElwee, whose neatly trimmed beard and scholarly wire frames are both beaded with water. "You just can't predict things like that."

Much of the spontaneous humor in McElwee's documentaries stems from his ability to capture everyday people in the midst of their mundane routines. "There should be two credits on my films," says McElwee, "film by me and film by life." He doesn't consider his films "art" because, "with art you control all the elements. This type of filmmaking gives up control to the world."

The trick for McElwee is to maintain the spontaneous feel of his films throughout the editing process. In *Sherman's March*, McElwee's best known and most critically acclaimed film, he succeeds. Throughout the two-and-a-half hours of footage that made the final cut, no one is safe from McElwee's 16mm camera: not family members, not prospective girlfriends, not even Burt Reynolds (whom he eventually tracks down during a location shoot in Georgia). Searching for love (and Burt) in the deep South, the filmmaker meets a string of offbeat belles beginning with Pat, a comely actress who captures McElwee's lens and his heart. He films her exercising and auditioning for a bit part in Reynolds' latest film. The situations McElwee finds himself in throughout the film often border on bizarre. But some of the scenes, as when he returns to a North Carolina island to find his girlfriend-of-the-moment shacking up with another man, are equally touching.

Time Indefinite has a far more serious tone than



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McElwee's earlier work. It begins with the filmmaker's joyous announcement of his plans to marry Marilyn Levine, a fellow documentarian with whom he codirected *Something to Do with the Wall*. Halfway through the film, the mood shifts to somber with the sudden death of McElwee's father, followed by his wife's miscarriage. Charleen, a tough-as-nails, middle-aged woman, who appears jovial in *Charleen* and *Sherman's March*, is far more somber in *Time Indefinite* as she clutches the ashes of her husband, who committed suicide by burning down the house in which they lived.

Despite their difference in tone, *Sherman's March* and *Time Indefinite* are similar in style. Both are narrated by the filmmaker, who often muses about issues ranging from the philosophical to the metaphysical in his warm, inquisitive drawl. ("Does a fish have a soul?" he recalls asking during a childhood fishing trip.) In both works, McElwee turns the camera on himself. "I liked the idea of subverting cinema verité an extra notch [by including myself in the work]," he says. How does McElwee respond to critics who consider his musings self-indulgent? "I resisted it for a long time, but felt it was something [the films] needed to round them out."

Both *Sherman's March* and *Time Indefinite* were filmed down South because, says McElwee, "I consider North Carolina, where I was raised, my home. It's less media-conscious than the East and has that edge of eccentricity." It's also home to much racial tension, the focus of his earlier film, *Backyard*, which resurfaces in *Sherman's March*. "I wanted to look at how blacks and whites relate in terms of preserving [memories of] the Civil War," he says.

McElwee again headed South to shoot his current project. He sees *Time Indefinite* as a prologue for the current journey, motivated by his father's death. *Six O'clock News* focuses on "little disasters" throughout the South that appear on the local evening news. Beginning with videotaped news footage, McElwee tracks down those people who had their 30-seconds of fame-through-misfortune and conducts follow-up interviews to learn how their lives have changed. In one instance, McElwee locates a Korean man in Jackson, Mississippi, whose wife was murdered in a wig shop robbery. By spending a few weeks with him, McElwee fleshes out the abbreviated portrait on the evening news and reveals how the man, Steve Im, fulfilled the American Dream by successfully buying and managing a chain of restaurants and retail stores. He also spent time with an Apache firefighter whom he spotted on a California newscast. "On television, I saw only the anonymous images of firefighters and I was curious to film one's life for a while."

As McElwee discusses the unfinished project, I sense a frustration that isn't about the deadline he has managed to push back numerous times. The carefree, rambling style that caused critics to call him "Paul Theroux with a camera" now seems to work against his role as loving husband and responsible parent to four-year-old son Adrian. McElwee, who ended *Time Indefinite* with a close-up of the newborn, is now vehement about not filming him. And while he used to get away for months with nothing but his camera, film, and a few dollars, he now leaves his wife and son for a week at the most. Moreover, for the first time, he has begun to question his motives. "I feel an uneasiness about invading other people's lives with a camera that I never felt before," he admits.

From the start, McElwee went against the grain of his tight-lipped southern family by exposing their lives on camera. Both his father and brother were doctors, but McElwee, ignoring family expectations, wanted to write from an early age. It was not until he finished college that he became interested in film. After viewing Fredrick Wiseman's *Titticut Follies* and Richard Leacock's *Primary*, he went to work for a South Carolina TV station and eventually attended a graduate film program at M.I.T. His thesis film, *Charleen*, reflected the personalized cinema verité style he admired in makers such as Ed Pincus and Jeff Kreines, which he further honed with *Space Coast*, *Backyard*, and his later works.

Nowadays, McElwee is most impressed with recent films from Eastern Europe and Russia, such as Alexander Sukarov's *Second Circle* and all of Emil Kusturica's works because both capitalize on the edginess of life. "They offer fiction with a documentary attitude," he observes. In the future, McElwee would like to try a hybrid of fiction and nonfiction and, eventually, embark on a project for which he'll teach public high school students about video and intersperse their video footage with his. "I want my son to go to public school, and I wonder what that means to me," he ponders, plucking one last blade of grass before returning to his basement office in the film study building—a windowless dungeon colored only by young Adrian's crayon sketches.

MICHELE SHAPIRO

Michele Shapiro is managing editor of The Independent.

Cineville

P R O D U C E R S

Cineville—the Los Angeles-based independent production company that gave Allison Anders the chance to personalize *Don't Look and It Won't Hurt*, an obscure book that she eventually turned into the critically acclaimed *Gas Food Lodging*—has established a reputation for low budget, auteur-driven product.

In 1989, Dan Hassid and Carl-Jan Colpaert, then heads of postproduction at Roger Corman's New World Pictures, left to start their own company, Cineville. They were joined by foreign partner, Christoph Henkel, a German industrialist. Cineville's first project, *Delusion*, was directed by Colpaert, an American Film Institute graduate. Although the partners were determined to make a film for "$40 or $40,000," according to Hassid, *Delusion* was eventually financed through pre-sales to Columbia/TriStar Home Video and wound up with a $750,000 budget. When *Delusion* measured up financially, the Cineville team was able to go back to Columbia/TriStar with *Gas Food Lodging*, budgeted at $1.5 million.

Following the success of *Gas Food Lodging*, "Cineville is branching out in terms of a range of budgets and materials," explains Hassid. The four-year-old company currently boasts a burgeoning production slate of 14 projects at various stages, from development to packaging, and a staff of 18, including Nancy Moss, vice president of production and development, formerly of New Line Cinema; Edwin Friendly, head of Cineville's international subsidiary and formerly with Vestron International; and Frank Evers, senior vice president of business affairs, previously of Columbia/TriStar International.

Hassid maintains that for Cineville, "The bottom line is the filmmaker's vision—that's what we buy into." While the company is open to unsolicited work, Hassid cautions that they are only interested in material that strongly reflects the director's personal vision, preferably with a screenplay by the director and with notable crew and talent in place. "We're less in the market for spec scripts and completion financing," Hassid continues.

Cineville is attracting some big name talent willing to forego bloated budgets and huge salaries to realize a project of passion. Tim Hunter (*River's Edge*), who recently directed *The Saint of Fort Washington* for Warner Bros., approached Cineville with *Nightwood Bar*, a $3-4 million murder mystery set in the not-often-filmed lesbian bar scene.

On the low- to no-budget end of the spectrum, the company remains enthusiastic. "I'm fascinated by ultra low-budget films by people who haven't made a movie before but will die to get their film made," says Hassid. He cites Cineville's *Inside the Gold Mine*, also a murder mystery, by Josh Evans, son of Hollywood producer Bob Evans (*Chinatown, The Godfather*). Evans may not have had to starve in order to direct his first film, but Hassid insists that *Gold Mine*'s budget is less than glittery at "*well* under $1 million."

For Cineville's lower-budget films like *Gold Mine*, "Financing comes from independent investors who are willing, for an equity stake, to take a roll of the dice." Cineville then goes the festival route and attempts to secure distribution, building on what Hassid sees as a developing track record for the critically acclaimed, low-budget product. For its higher-budget product, falling in the $1.5 to $4-million range, the sources of financing are diverse. "Live Entertainment has emerged as an important player. The $1.5-2 million range makes sense for the home video companies," explains



The folks at Cineville (left to right): Nancy Moss, Carl-Jan Colpaert, Frank Evers, and Dan Hassid.

Photo: Lauren Greenfield, courtesy Cineville

Hassid, whereas companies such as Miramax and New Line would be tapped for the higher budget projects featuring prominent above-the-line talent.

The Cineville philosophy is also built around the idea of developing ongoing relationships with filmmakers and with talent. One that's served them well is their long-standing collaboration with Allison Anders, who recently completed her second Cineville production, *Mi Vida Loca*. (*My Crazy Life*). A look at the lives and relationships of girl gangs in the East Los Angeles barrio, Echo Park, *Mi Vida Loca* was financed by HBO Showcase and is slated for a March 1994 release by Sony Pictures Classics.

Mi Vida Loca was, in fact, scripted prior to *Gas Food Lodging* at the Sundance Institute Writers Lab, but was refueled by *Gas Food*'s success. The poignant story of a single mother with two teenage daughters, *Gas Food Lodging* not only brought her to the attention of the New York Critic's Circle, which honored her with Best New Director of 1992, but also to female contemporaries who established her as a sort of guru, according to Hassid, and deluged her with scripts. Hassid quips "For a while, we got every mid-life, menopausal angst script you can imagine."

The strength of Anders' vision and instincts are qualities Cineville would like to build on. Under the Cineville umbrella a producing partnership called Cinechicks has been formed; Anders will creatively oversee projects by other women directors, while Cineville will provide support and infrastructure. Largely a function of Anders' energies and availability, Cinechicks is temporarily on hold while Anders busily juggles projects, among them a film for Universal that Martin Scorsese will executive produce.

Other projects in the works at Cineville are *Journey*, an adaptation of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, directed by Czech-born Douchan Gersi, who was raised in the Belgian Congo; *Suicide Kings*, a coproduction with the Canadian company Pacific Motion Pictures, directed by Keoni Waxman (*Almost Blue*); and Anders' third Cineville production, *Paul Is Dead*, a semi-autobiographical story about a young woman's escape from abuse into a fantasy world presided over by her guardian angel, Paul McCartney.

Filmmakers with scripts can send materials to the development department at Cineville, 1861 South Bundy Dr., Los Angeles, CA 90025.

JULIA HAMMER

Julia Hammer is program associate at the Artists' New Works division at the New York Foundation on the Arts.

Wieland Speck

FESTIVAL DIRECTOR

Panorama Section, Berlin International Film Festival

"At first I was sad to be in New York and not be able to run around enjoying the city," says Wieland Speck. "But when I started screening films, many of which take place in New York, on my hotel VCR, there were a lot of psychopathic killers. So I guess now I'm glad to be inside."

Speck, 42, whose wide blue eyes, reddish-blonde bangs, and longer-than-James Dean sideburns cause him to appear younger, makes light of the circumstances surrounding his current visit to

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New York. But as director of Panorama, one of several sections that comprise the Berlin International Film Festival each February, Speck has spent much of August locked away in an upscale Manhattan hotel room where he has amassed stacks of videocassettes and back issues of both the *New York Times* and the *Village Voice*. Second in size only to Cannes, the massive Berlin festival—which has grown since its inception shortly after WWII to include its own bustling market and a booth for American independents—will take place next year from February 10-21. The U.S. is Speck's first stop in a five-month search for films to fill Panorama's 50 coveted spots.

As Speck told a gathering of film- and videomakers at a reception sponsored by the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF), Panorama each year plays host to a colorful array of features, documentaries, *auteur* films, and shorts. Last February, the section, which focuses on subjects from gay and lesbian issues to racism, appeared to receive far more attention from the press, makers, and locals than either the Competition or Forum sections.



Photo: Jörn Hartmann, courtesy Berlin International Film Festival

Last year the festival's main event, the Competition, directed by Moritz de Hadelyn, included box-office stinkers such as Barry Levinson's *Toys* and Danny DeVito's *Hoffa*, while the Forum, directed by Ulrich Gregor and known for its esoteric arthouse films, offered a lackluster program with a few exceptions, including Nick Gomez' *Laws of Gravity* and Mark Rappaport's *Rock Hudson's Home Movies*. Panorama's screening list, on the other hand, ran the gamut from Mark Huestis' *Sex Is...*, a documentary on gay men coping with sexuality in the age of AIDS, and Monika Treut's short film *Dr. Paglia*, to Woody Allen's *Husbands & Wives*. The latter was one of 20 films selected for the by-invitation-only "Panorama Special" section. Ten documentaries, 20 "art & essay" films, and 30 shorts rounded out the Panorama program. To avoid screening hundreds of TV-length productions, the section places strict time limits on both short and feature-length entries; shorts can be no longer than 20 minutes and features must exceed 70.

Although Panorama's offerings vary widely in content and style, all of them, says Speck, share commercial appeal. "We want theater owners to watch our films and then to show them," he says. "The big advantage of Berlin is that [with films showing around the clock at 11 theaters throughout the city], the festival has large audiences on which to test a film's appeal."

With his long legs stretched out in front of him, Speck admires the view of Central Park treetops and grey, pre-War skyscrapers from the hotel room's sole window—a view most New Yorkers (not only psychopaths) would kill for. He says he's already seen a lot of impressive work in the States and that so far he has invited one U.S. maker and one Russian maker to Berlin. Speck hesitates to name names, however, because he won't announce the final program until after the December deadline for submissions has passed.

A filmmaker himself, Speck knows the ropes of the business. But he actually took over as Panorama's director only last year when the section's founder and longtime director, Manfred Salzgeber, became too ill to continue in the role. Prior to succeeding Salzgeber, Speck had served as the section's assistant since 1981. He says he learned a great deal from Salzgeber, one of Germany's leading film historians who, in the 1960s spawned a new breed of arthouse theaters called *programme kinos* in Berlin. "Because of his experience on the other end, Manfred knew how to create a program of films for the festival that should be in theaters," says Speck, who has made few changes to the section so far.

To the dismay of some makers, however, he did choose last year to whittle down the number of film selections from 70 to 50. "The press was complaining that we showed too many films, and I wanted the section to have a little more focus," he says.

Tracking down Speck during the festival in Berlin is nearly impossible. He and his four- to five-person staff buzz around their cluttered of-

fice in the same building where the market takes place, orchestrating press conferences for each of the section's films as well as a party that, last year anyway, was the fest's hottest invite.

Speck's own career in film began in 1979 when he studied with experimental filmmaker George Kuchar in San Francisco. On a whim, Speck submitted the first film he ever completed—a 15-minute reel shot on 16mm—to the Berlin festival and, to his surprise, it was accepted. He then applied for a job with the festival and was hired a few years later. His first and only feature, the love story *Westler: East of the Wall* (1985), offered a unique challenge for the novice maker: "We shot parts with a hidden camera in East Germany. After we filmed a bus driving by that carried a 'Free German Youth' group, the Secret Service took our camera away and disposed of that day's footage. When the film was finally broadcast on West German television, I was banned from visiting East Germany for three years."

One year after the ban was lifted, the Wall came down, and with it, many say, the identity of the political Berlin Festival crumbled as well. Speck, however, disagrees. "Berlin was the window to the East, and it still is today" he says. In addition to breaking ground by premiering Eastern European and Russian films throughout the 1970s, the festival was also the first to recognize Chinese cinema when it awarded its highest honor, the Golden Bear, to Zhang Yimou's *Red Sorghum* in 1988. Taiwanese-American director Ang Lee's *The Wedding Banquet* and mainlander Xie Fei's *The Lake of Scented Souls* captured the top prizes at last year's festival.

Panorama, established in the 1970s, has broken some of its own ground over the years. The section was one of the first to provide a forum for gay and lesbian films, which account for about six percent of the program. Now, in addition to vying with other festivals for the hottest gay and lesbian European premieres, Speck also has to compete with Berlin's Forum section. The Forum snatched up both Todd Haynes' *Poison* and Tom Kalin's *Swoon* in recent years. When asked about the competition between the two sections, Ulrich Gregor, Forum director, replies that "the sections tend to overlap. It just depends who sees the films first."

Both sections actively pursue works from American makers. Last year, says Speck, his section screened 11 made-in-the-U.S.A. documentaries—more than ever in its history. But there weren't too many features to choose from. This year, the tide may have turned. "So far I've screened many more features than documentaries," he says. While in New York, Speck plans to meet with some makers whose works appeared in previous festivals to scope out any worthwhile new projects. Speck adds that he works closely with both the Independent Feature Project and the Sundance festival in his fervent search for films to fill his schedule.

Not many of the slots are reserved for German makers, however, because Speck says the three

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years since the fall of the Wall have been the worst for German cinema. Not even Germans watch German films, he notes, citing that just four percent of films shown in German theaters are from Germany. He blames the government, which he says exists to support labs and camera rentals rather than individual makers. Observes the part-time maker, "It's impossible to have continuity in your work because you're always applying to one region or another for money."

Speck's own film projects have taken a back seat to his work with the festival as of late. But he has an American distributor, Frameline in San Francisco, and *Among Men*, a retrospective containing five of his shorter films, will be released this fall in Germany, Japan, and the U.S. Speck seems skittish when discussing his own works and calls himself "a terrible salesperson." He may not win the Golden Bear for self-promotion anytime soon, but when he rounds up and promotes an eclectic mix of films from around the world to wow the masses in Berlin, the results speak for themselves.

MICHELE SHAPIRO

Michele Shapiro's report on the 1993 Berlin International Film Festival appeared in the May 1993 issue of The Independent.

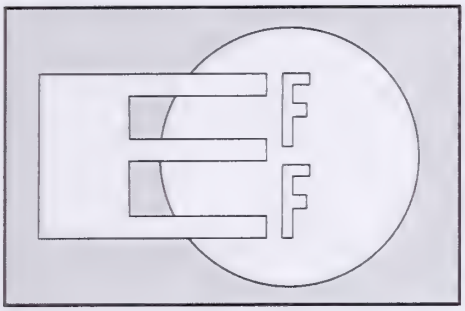
Electronic Frontier Foundation

PUBLIC POLICY ADVOCATES

America is poised on the verge of an enormous explosion in information distribution technologies. Pioneers on the "electronic frontier" know that an ever-expanding amount of communication will take place in this uncharted territory, where the convergence and rapid transmission of video, text, data, and voice are possible.

Broadcasting, cable, telephone, and newspaper companies are currently locked in a battle to cross regulatory lines and stake a claim on the new frontier. Cable companies are aiming to provide phone service, and, with a recent federal court ruling allowing Bell Atlantic to offer cable programming in the Washington, D.C. area, phone companies are heading into the consumer video market. The turf war has complicated policy and control issues, which in turn has stalled progress on implementation.

Injecting a new perspective into the debate around the future of communications is the Electronic Frontier Foundation (EFF). Refreshingly, this policy group is more interested in the public interest than potential profits. Unlike the lumbering, grey flannel-suited phone and media conglomerates, EFF comes from a different mindset—



the computer world, which is full of idiosyncratic entrepreneurs who got their start running operations out of basements and garages. Launched in 1990 by Lotus computer software company founder Mitch Kapor and Grateful Dead lyricist (and devoted hacker) John Perry Barlow, EFF has emerged as a powerful voice for both "electronic democracy" and pragmatic solutions to the current technological gridlock.

"Organizations like the Electronic Frontier Foundation are committed to developing detailed public policy recommendations and political strategies necessary to close the gap between optimism and emerging reality," Kapor wrote in the magazine *WIRED*. The optimism to which Kapor alludes is the belief that new technologies will give users broad control over future information networks and that the policies governing their use should accommodate public rather than business interests. According to Kapor, the ideal network would be "a National Information Infrastructure (NII) that promotes... diversity of users and manufacturers, true communications among the people, and all the dazzling goodies of home shopping, movies on demand, teleconferencing, and cheap, instant databases—composed of a high bandwidth, open architecture incorporating distributed, interactive switching."

"We are trying to put forward a vision of the NII based on the principles of openness with the goal of achieving diversity, promoting free speech, and encouraging the development of community," Kapor elaborated in a recent interview conducted via e-mail.

What does this mean for independent film- and videomakers? Currently, if you have a video that you'd like to get on TV, you'd have to take it to a broadcast or cable network and attempt to get carriage. Your work would have to meet certain qualifying standards, including restrictions on content. And the network or station could always say no.

Theoretically, the new communications technologies as envisioned by Kapor would operate without such gatekeepers. The system would be decentralized, allowing base-to-base and interactive communications and would be set up to send and receive information at any point on the system—unlike the present-day receive-only broadcast model. The lines of communication would operate more like open phone lines, which are governed by "common carrier" laws. These require that services be made available regardless of content and at a single rate. What are the implications for independents? It potentially means that new voices could emerge into the light, controversial films and tapes could have an easier time getting access to audiences, and distribution might cost less.

However, before any of this occurs, the industry superpowers must come to some agreement as to who will build and control what. Recognizing that negotiations may indefinitely halt growth on a fully functional, fiber optic communications network, EFF has tried to refocus the debate on near-term, transitional solutions. One such idea has been tagged the "Open Platform" proposal.

"The Open Platform is a broader notion... incorporating notions of the expansion of universal service to include a switched, digital capability," said Kapor via e-mail. It "allow(s) telephone and cable companies to provide video programming and common carriage services on the same wire." What this means is that, in addition to the fixed-program channels characterizing today's television, this open architecture would also allow viewers to connect to any outside program provider, much like people now use the phone companies' "switched" networks to call anyone with a phone. The Open Platform proposition suggests widespread use of an already developed technology, known as ISDN or Integrated Services Digital Network—a public switched telephone network that allows cheap communication in graphics, data, voice, and video. ISDN is designed to carry digital signals over existing copper cable in the final distance between the telephone company and the home, thereby eliminating the need and considerable expense of converting the entire infrastructure to a fiber optic system.

EFF's message about democracy and pragmaticism is being heard in Washington. Because EFF philosophically supports Vice President Al Gore's pet proposal for a data superhighway (a fiber optic grid with local links), EFF has easy access to the Clinton Administration and works closely with Representative Edward Markey, chair of the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications and Finance.

Nonetheless, EFF has come under fire for its recent move from Cambridge, Massachusetts, to Washington, DC, mostly from computer hackers and other past supporters who accuse EFF of selling out. They point to its willingness to accept funding from such companies and trade associations as IBM, Apple, AT&T, Bell Atlantic, and Newspaper Association of America, and the National Cable Television Association.

Other critics target EFF's proposals for the Open Platform and ISDN, claiming that transitional technologies are financially draining diversions from the goal of an operational fiber optic infrastructure.

But that's okay as far as Kapor and EFF are concerned. After all, democracy wasn't built in a day.

NIKI MITCHELL

Niki Mitchell is a writer living in Washington, DC.

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MADE IN JAPAN

BY SCOTT SINKLER

A country where group thought reigns supreme is no place for independent producers — or is it? As filmmaker Scott Sinkler discovers, a number of rising talents uphold the Japanese independent tradition.

Those who followed the recent saga of career diplomat Owada Masako's forced betrothal to Crown Prince Naruhito were treated to an enlightening morality play about the futility of trying to think for yourself in Japan. In a country where appearances, consensus, and loyalty to the group are paramount, wanting to set your own agenda can be asking far too much. So it's not surprising that independent media in Japan exists on the fringe of the fringe, pursued by people who've abandoned any hope of participating in the mainstream.

Hoping to learn more about Japanese independent film and video, I recently stayed in Japan for nine months with the help of an Artist's Fellowship from the Japan Foundation. I watched about 300 films and tapes, met with makers, exhibitors, and critics, and visited media organizations. I'd spent three months in Japan previously and can speak the language to some degree. What I found was an independent media field that is infinitely smaller than it is here and one that is virtually unfunded. But maybe *because* of the position independents occupy in Japanese society, the few who do excel do so in interesting ways.

Most of us have had a taste of Japan's long and rich film history through the works of Kurosawa, Ozu, and Mizoguchi. There has also been a great deal of fine cinema made in Japan since the 1930's that we've never had a chance to see in the U.S. But when television took hold in the mid-sixties, the major studios could no longer make money and became increasingly cautious, relying more and more on formula films. Today, virtually the only Japanese features that compete economically with product from Hollywood are cartoons.

This past decade, however, has seen an increasing number of films attempting to make more of a statement, socially and artistically. Films about youthful anomie and Third World immigrant laborers are popular lately. But the theme that has continued to provide a baseline for Japanese artistic expression over the last century, in literature as well as film, is the conflict that springs from modernization.

One of the most obvious places this is manifested is in relationships, which still seem caught between the traditional past—where love is permitted only at the pleasure of the social structure, and women are a form of currency between families—and a mass-marketed present, which promises fairytale romance with all the Western trappings. Japanese traditionally don't express their feelings directly, but Western influences create expectations of a "go for it" approach. As a result, young people are often at a loss for words or actions. From primetime TV to experimental super 8 shorts, a pervasive theme is the impossibility of real connection between the sexes.

Recent examples include Yazaki Hitoshi's *March Comes in Like a Lion* (*Sangatsu no rion*), which explores with a Jarmusch-like eye the existential ennui of a brother-sister love affair with no tomorrow and only a tentative today. In Kurotsuchi Mitsuo's *Traffic Jam* (*Jutai*), Tokyo's abominable traffic patterns are the vehicle for looking at modern marriage and the social pressures that bear on it. Yamada Yoji 's *My Sons* (*Musuko*) asks what to do with aging parents and features a hearing-impaired romance as subplot. Yamada Isao's *I've Heard the Ammonite Murmur* (*Ammonite no sasayaki o kiita*) is the first feature by an experimental artist used to working in super 8. It also depicts listless sibling incest, along with fantasies of infantile regression.

An interesting side-effect of such deep heterosexual dysfunctionality is that, in a weird kind of way, gayness has become a kind of fad in Japan. "One reason is that the cliched straight relationship has been exhausted in the TV dramas and so on, and has become a boring pattern," says Hashiguchi Ryosuke, a thoughtful, partly out ("I don't really want to campaign about it") gay filmmaker in his early thirties. "The idea of a new form for relationships is refreshing."

Strangely (to us anyway), this trend is not being driven by gays themselves, who are almost all in the closet, but by mainstream pop culture and the box office. "Women are the patrons of the movie industry," says Hashiguchi. "And they like to watch the 'pure' love between two men, without the social framework." An odd result of all this is that when the Tokyo Gay and Lesbian Film Festival premiered a few years ago, the hall was packed almost completely



From Ogawa Shinsuke's *Magino Village: A Tale*, a 3-1/2 hour documentary detailing the life in a Japanese Village over 1,000 years. The crew spent 13 years on the project.

All photos courtesy Scott Sinkler

with neatly groomed, apparently straight teenage girls.

Regarding his sensitive and darkly serious 16mm feature about the struggles of two teenage male prostitutes, *Slight Fever of a Twenty Year Old* (*Hatachi no binetsu*), Hashiguchi says, "It's a subject that's close to my life experience. But it's different here from other countries where there's a political quality to gay activities. For me, it's not so much political as about self-awareness. It's not to make other people understand, but to help myself understand and arrive at a clearer view of the relationship between me and society." This kind of introspective sensibility characterizes the best of the fictional and experimental independent work I saw in Japan.

Somewhat more mainstream and with a bigger budget is Nakajima Takehiro's *Okoge*, which loosely translates as "fag hag." It's about a gay relationship that revolves around a straight, young female matchmaker. Matsuoka George's *Twinkle* (*Kira kira hikaru*), produced by Fuji TV, is about a marriage of convenience between an alcoholic woman and a closeted gay man, which realistically depicts family pressure and social taboo while attempting to humanize same-sex love. These films are interesting when viewed in the Japanese context, and they're well-made. But there are things about them that will no doubt strike Western viewers, particularly gays, as queer (in the old sense).

In America, unless you're truly sociopathic, you can always find some kind of community of like-minded outcasts to belong to. But in Japan, the mainstream is so broad that people at the edges of society tend to be cut off from each other.

Since there are so few independent filmmakers in Japan—and almost all live in Tokyo—they pretty much know each other. But none recognizes any "community" of filmmakers as such. You might think that Japanese groupism would lead to coalitions of artists. But if anything, the individual production groups that form around directors like little fiefdoms seem to insulate them from one another.

When I described organizations like the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers, they'd shrug and say it couldn't happen there. A tendency toward factionalism seems to prevent much cooperation or contact between makers working in different genres, or even in different philosophies within the same genre.

But independent filmmaking in Japan goes back to the 1920s, when leftist *puro kino* or "proletariat cinema" films confronted labor issues and politics. That kind of spirit was suppressed during Japan's militarization, the Pacific War, and the American Occupation. But as in the West, the sixties and seventies were a politically turbulent time in Japan, with conflicts arising from the country's rapid economic growth, modernization, and military relationship with the U.S. As a result, progressive organizations were robust enough to fund a few independent filmmakers. This tide lifted two talented documentarists: Ogawa Shinsuke and Tsuchimoto Noriaki.

Over the span of a decade, Ogawa and Tsuchimoto focused almost exclusively on one issue each almost exclusively, generating a large body of powerful social documentaries. Tsuchimoto made 16 films between 1971 and 1976 about Minamata disease, which was caused by the callous dumping of industrial mercury wasand brought to Western attention through the photographs of Eugene Smith. Ogawa, meanwhile, followed the struggle of farmers as they tried to keep the government from appropriating their land for the new Narita Airport. That subject yielded seven films, including *Narita: Peasants of the Second Fortress* (*Sanrizuka: dai ni toride no hitobito*), from 1968 to 1973. Many of their films ran for more than two hours; some exceeded three.

Often borrowing money from friends and family and gaining the support of thousands involved in the issues they were chronicling, Ogawa and Tsuchimoto epitomized independent grassroots filmmaking at its best, living with their subjects for years at a time and setting up screenings nationwide.

Tsuchimoto's office has a musty taste of history—an ancient flatbed, reels of film, and fading binders packed with newspaper clippings line the walls. He sets his gaze on the center of the *kotatsu* (a kind of combination coffeetable/electric blanket), grabs one cigarette after another from a wooden box at his side, and holds court. Aoki-san, his middle-aged assistant, shuffles silently back and forth bringing first coffee, then sweets,

One of Japan's eminent documentarians is Tsuchimoto Noriaki, who produced a large body of work on the dumping of industrial mercury and its result, Minamata disease.



Gay films in Japan are "not so much political as about self-awareness," says Hashiguchi Ryosuke, director of the feature *Slight Fever of a 20 Year Old*, about the struggles of two teenage male prostitutes.

then tea, then fruit. "The sixties and seventies were a very special period in Japan," says Tsuchimoto. "At that time, people felt that you couldn't get the truth from TV, so they had to see independent films. The mass media was really lousy. For students then, it was really important to see films in independent settings. The Minamata films never got on TV. People learned about the issue through my films. I screened them everywhere, and a million people saw them."

The student uprisings of 1970 were *the* watershed in Japanese leftist politics. The global student movement of that age was taken up in Japan with a vengeance. But the authorities quashed it harshly, sending activists scurrying back into mainstream society where most remain today, anonymously moving through their forties. "It was a very big movement," Tsuchimoto recalls. "It had a lot of impact. But everyone was beaten, abandoned, disappointed." Since that time, progressive politics has spoken with a very faint voice in Japan.

In 1976, Ogawa moved his crew to a small farming village in northern Japan, where they lived communally and made a series of epic films about rural life until the director's premature death last spring at age 55. Tsuchimoto is still active, continuing to follow the Minamata story while branching out into other topics, including a dispute between Russia and Japan over a group of northern islands.

Another intense and driven documentary maker is Hara Kazuo, who directed *The Emperor's Naked Army Marches On* (*Yuki yukite shingun*) [profiled in the December 1992 *Independent*]. But apart from these visionaries, most independent social documentary in Japan has been formally orthodox and ideologically predictable.

One group that consistently produces and distributes social issue films is Siglo, Ltd. Its new Tokyo office has a clean, modern atmosphere, with a small staff working Japanese-style in one open room. Producer Yamagami Tetsujiro is a clever and energetic entrepreneur in his mid-thirties who tries to combine a commitment to social issues with a knack for business. "I want to camouflage my social opinion as entertainment," he says.

Yamagami feels that the smashing of the student movement left a gap in quality filmmaking. "The generation that followed Tsuchimoto and Ogawa didn't make anything worthwhile," he says. "The films aren't interesting. But I think that people in their twenties and thirties will start to make them now, because they're freer. They don't have any connection to ideology. When you're making a film, ideology just gets in the way."

Among the films that Siglo has produced are *Twenty-seven Years in Jail* (*Sayama jiken: Ishikawa Kazuo*) by Koike Masato, about a *burakumin* (so-called "untouchable") man unfairly convicted of a murder in the 1960s, and *A Wind Blows from Shigaraki* (*Shigaraki kara kaze fuite kuru*) by Nishiyama Masato, about mentally retarded men who work in pottery shops. Siglo's films are all quite conventional, but competent and socially worthwhile. The company currently produces Tsuchimoto's films as well. Yamagami is now working on five projects at once: two noncommercial sponsored works and three documentaries. He has also produced feature films and has hired *Okoge*'s director, Nakajima Takehiro, to write the script for his next project.

Perhaps the most interesting recent documentary is Satoh Makoto's *Living on the River Agano* (*Aga ni ikiru*), a slow, vérité-style portrait of a riverside village and its elderly denizens. It has done well in Japan, won a special Japanese Sundance Institute prize, and premiered in the U.S. at the Margaret Mead Film Festival in October. While its approach is very simple, it's nicely shot and stands head and shoulders above other recent Japanese work. It shows dedication in the tradition of Ogawa and Tsuchimoto in its four-year shooting schedule, its sensitivity, and attention to detail.

Aesthetically, the most striking characteristic of Japanese media of all genres is that there tends to be much less concern with structure and plot. For centuries Japan's literature and drama have endeavored to evoke subtle emotional states, delicate gestures, and to savor minor events for their atmosphere. Western narrative, on the other hand, usually tells a story, makes a point, leads us from beginning to end, cause to effect. To Westerners, Japanese films—both documentaries and dramatic narratives—can feel vague, meandering, lacking in coherence or "solidness." And transitions can often seem abrupt and illogical. Of course, that often makes things interesting, but it may be one of the reasons Japanese films haven't found much of a market in the United States.

"As long as you *feel* each individual scene, it's fine," says Yamagami. "There's a saying: 'God lives in the details.' Japanese people like that idea a lot. They pay attention to the details. You just keep paying attention to the details, and eventually you end up with a film. That's why the story is weak in Japanese films."

Ogawa Productions, which has cranked out miles of film over the last three decades, is wedged into a small apartment in a section of Tokyo called Ogikubo. In their soundstage/screening room/dubbing studio—really a living room lined with black cloth—a dozen film folks are gabbing over a sumptuous spread of sushi and beer. I've been trying to pry a candid opinion from jovial fiftyish Fuseya Shiryoo, producer of Ogawa's entire *oeuvre*. He finally concedes that while he gets few chances to see them, he generally





doesn't like Western documentaries. "Too analytical—they focus too strongly around a central point. It's just my opinion, but I think they often become simplistic, propagandistic, and uninteresting. They're always about some incident, political issue, or problem. I prefer to make films that explore the subtleties of daily life."

Nichijo seikatsu—"daily life"—is a phrase that came up in many conversations, with makers of all genres. "I believe there's something beyond words and language," says Satoh Makoto, "maybe facial expression or atmosphere, that really expresses things. These days everything is mediated, explained by words in the newspaper: this is caused by that. Everything is simplified. I want to capture something beyond that."

In the land of Sony, Ikegami, and JVC, video has not won easy favor among serious independents. There's a distinct sneer that curls the lips of most Japanese filmmakers when talk turns to tape. But then with Japanese TV as bad as it is, it's no wonder the medium gets such a bad rap. The word "formulaic" is sufficient to describe the vast bulk of TV programming in Japan. Only the nightly dramas—relatively wholesome soap operas for the twentysomething set—employ much visual innovation, but their plots are interchangeable. Nonetheless, TV is an even more pervasive presence in Japan than in the U.S., claiming a place in banks, taxis, trains, and overlooking Tokyo's major piazzas like looming Orwellian eyes. It's annoyingly common for the tube to be left on through visits by guests, dinner, and heart-to-heart talks.

Videomaker Matsubara Akira came out of the labor movement rather than film, and saw videotape as a tool with advantages. At the Petit Monde coffeeshop in Shinjuku—a nondescript place where Tokyo journalists rent a square meter of space at $6 a cup—Matsubara walks in and drops a pile of cassettes on the table with a flourish. He introduces himself as a "video activist" and starts telling me about the work of his group, Video Press.

In the rare position of having its own S-VHS A/B-roll system, Video Press is able to produce low-budget organizing tapes about issues like labor, the Emperor's wartime responsibility, and Korean comfort women. Matsubara trains and offers equipment to housewives, students, and other novices to make their own media about the environment, nuclear issues, and the controversy over the deployment of the so-called Self-Defense Army for UN operations.

Matsubara had just met American video activist Dee Halleck at a conference the month before, organized by a group called the Forum for Citizen's Television. During the Gulf War, Tetsuo Kogawa, an art school professor with ties to U.S. mediamakers, gave Matsubara a copy of Deep Dish TV's *Gulf Crisis TV Project: News World Order*. In about a week, he had titled and dubbed it into Japanese and had little trouble distributing 300 copies to individuals at cost.

"The tape had a very good impact," says Matsubara. "Newspapers wrote about it, and it became well-known. From hand to hand, mouth to mouth, the tape influenced people. Many people now want to edit tapes themselves. I think one of the reasons is that Paper Tiger taught us that anyone can make video. The technology of mediamaking had been concentrated in the hands of the mass media. But we've just started making our own."

In terms of video art, however, a curator who was leaving the field out of frustration informed me somewhat sardonically that "Video art does not exist in Japan." The onlylong-lived consistent center for such work, Nakaya Fujiko's Scan Gallery, has temporarily suspended operations. And the dozen or so pieces that I saw didn't encourage me to devote much time to the genre.

Experimental film in Japan, on the other hand, is thriving. Almost everything is super 8. Because of the cost, little work is done in 16mm outside of documentaries, and feature directors who cut their teeth on super 8 usually graduate directly to 35mm. There is an active 8mm scene, with a loose national alliance called V.I.E.W. Network, cineclubs, and a few festivals devoted to the format. Most small format film and videomakers are in their early twenties. Their films are a fascinating window into the young Japanese psyche; many seem to paint a dark, depressed vision of ennui and isolation.

One example is a very simple narrative short shot for about $700 on Hi8 handicam and titled *Something Beyond My Thoughts*. With just one screenwriting class under her belt, 27-year-old Yokoyama Tomoko tells a simple story about the emptiness of modern urban life, terror of the opposite sex, and, once again, the impossibility of love. Being a woman, Yokoyama is part of a tiny, but growing subset in Japan. Women directors are almost nonexistent in the Japanese feature world, very rare in documentaries, and not so common in video art. But recently, there have been more young women making experimental and narrative works in super 8 and Hi8.

Sumiko Haneda, who directed her first film in 1957 and recently made two successful documentaries about the elderly, told me, "It wasn't so much that I felt directly discriminated against, but it took me more than 10 years to gain the trust of men in the field." And trust is *everything* in Japan.

Minorities in Japan make up less than one percent of the population. They include people of Korean descent, Ainu (indigenous people), *burakumin* (so-called "untouchables," who haved been discriminated against for gen-



Like Tsuchimoto, Ogawa devoted much of his life to a single subject and is considered one of the father's of Japanese social issue documentary. Still from Ogawa's *Narita: Peasants of the Second Fortress.*

erations because they work with meat and leather), and foreign laborers. None of these groups has begun to make its own media, though I spoke to an Ainu village head in Hokkaido who said he hoped to do so in the future.

The distinction between "professional" and "amateur" is sharply drawn in Japan. This keeps people who would consider themselves "independents" if they were American in a constant state of hobbyism, leaving them little confidence to move forward. Young people I met who seemed to have vision and skill would constantly plead, "But I'm just an amateur."

The Pia Film Festival, sincerely dedicated to providing a showcase for such people, seemed to reinforce this lowly status when I went to interview several young makers who'd been finalists for Pia's annual production grant award—worth up to $250,000 and the only one of its kind. Throughout the interviews, there were always at least two staff members present. They were very helpful, but acted a little like chaperones, discouraging me from contacting the makers directly and constantly apologizing on their behalf, as if they were slightly naughty children.

In terms of funding and exhibition possibilities, America seems like indie heaven to Japanese artists. There are virtually no agencies or foundations in Japan that support media. The one or two exceptions are not really open to true independents, and don't give much in any case. Social issue documentaries are funded by the makers themselves, with help from the interest groups that support the film's message. Experimental and personal work is funded completely out of the makers' pockets. Filmmakers often sell tickets before a film is finished and almost always solicit loans and donations from individuals.

In Satoh's case, he raised an average of $85 from each of 1,400 people, writing thousands of letters begging for bucks. Filmmakers in Japan have always leaned heavily on friends and acquaintances for a large share of expenses, an approach that wouldn't get even the most popular American producer very far. But interpersonal connections and the obligations that go with them are very strong in Japan; an arm doesn't have to be twisted very hard before it shells out.

Yamagami's films are usually budgeted at around $200,000. Unusually businesslike for his field, he managed to establish good relations with someone at a bank and gets 70 percent of his financing that way. The other 30 percent he borrows interest-free from friends. He has a "screening membership" of 5,000 from whom he collects admission charges, and his sponsored work picks up the slack.

Independent distribution in Japan often means the filmmaker takes a print under his arm and screens it himself. There are just a few distributors of independent media in Japan, and none has a catalog. Nor are there many places to distribute to. There's virtually no nontheatrical market; colleges rarely use media, libraries do not buy it. Video stores are everywhere, but their stock is even narrower than the average corner shops in the States: commercial hits, cartoons, *yakuza* (gangster) series, and always a room full of *poruno*.

Almost every movie theater in Japan is owned by one of the five studios. They show their own films exclusively, plus foreign majors. Large cities usually have one or two tiny arthouse-like spaces. Sapporo's charming 35mm venue, Theatre Kino, sports shiny new projectors and all of 29 seats. But most of the work shown comes from our side of the world.

None of the documentary filmmakers I spoke to knew anything about foreign distribution, and only one had a foreign sales rep, which explains why we don't see much of their work. As far as TV is concerned, independent documentarists don't even think about it; few have ever had their work aired either in Japan or abroad. NHK is the only game in town for independents, and the sliver of time it allocates to independents goes almost completely to Western work.

An indispensable Japanese expression is *sho ga nai*—"It can't be helped." Independents in Japan tend to lack the driving ambition that's so prevalent in the U.S. Even the most successful filmmakers appeared to have fallen into the field without much intention. Others seemed fatalistic about the future, more or less content just to get by. Despite laboring for half a decade to create an award-winning film, Satoh Makoto doesn't even consider himself an independent filmmaker: "To be an independent filmmaker means to create a situation in which you can continue to make films. Since I've just made one film, I don't feel like I'm an independent filmmaker yet." Coming from a country where every wannabe with a handicam lays claim to that title, the humility is refreshing.

"Young filmmakers don't have any models," says Tsuchimoto. "They have technique, skills, and technology—8mm, computers, and so on. But what they make really lacks soul. They can make slick work—good montage, and so on. But they don't have a message to convey."

Matsubara is more upbeat: "Generally speaking, Japanese people *are* passive. But young people, activists, are changing a lot. Recently, Japanese have become much more active. Every day I'm feeling more and more that

things are moving in that direction." He continues presciently, "The other thing is that the political situation will soon start to change rapidly soon. The economy is getting worse. So other issues will come up that we'll have to look at. More people will want to join in and make video. So I'm very optimistic."

Tsuchimoto Noriaki, after years of living lean at the edge of Japan's film culture, has recently taken up a Hi8 palmcorder and brandishes it with a twinkle in his eye. "Japan has many good themes for documentaries. So I feel privileged to be in this country. There are so many things to make films about here."

Scott Sinkler is an independent producer from New York and coproducer of Nanako Kurihara's new documentary about the Japanese women's movement, Ripples of Change (Onna kara onna-tachi e).



One prolific independent documentary company is Siglo, Inc., which produced such works as *A Wind Blows from Shigaraki*, about mentally retarded men who work in pottery shops.

Documentarian Satoh Makoto raised an average of $85 from each of 1,400 individuals to finance his recent first film, *Living on the River Agano*.



Women make up a small but growing percentage of the independent media makersin Japan. Yokoyama Tomoko's Hi8 short *Something Beyond My Thoughts* takes up common themes in Japanese work: the emptiness of modern urban life, terror of the opposite sex, and the impossibility of love.



Southern Exposure:

Mediamakers from Tallahassee to Atlanta prefer down-home storytelling to Hollywood glitz.

BY STEVE DOLLAR

Working from deep in a region that the motion picture industry often looks to as a source of cheap labor and chameleon-like locations, a stalwart independent director like Victor Nunez can enjoy the irony of his success in making *Ruby in Paradise*. This persuasively low-key drama has carried the filmmaker and the film's star, Ashley Judd, to acclaim at the Sundance, Cannes, and New York film festivals and bids to become a winter arthouse sensation.

Being based in the South is "a blessing and a curse. You stay naive a long time," reasons Nunez, who lives in Tallahassee, Florida, and shot *Ruby* in early 1992 in the Panhandle beach resort Panama City. The long gap between the new film and Nunez's previous *A Flash of Green* (1984) and the director's knack for winning festival circuit favor mark him as something of a phenomenon. "People say, 'So, you're they guy from Florida who makes those strange movies in the middle of nowhere and brings 'em to Cannes.'"

Hey, it's a distinction. And one sought by many Southern film- and videomakers who, like Nunez, "didn't understand you had to go to Hollywood."

There are more interesting stories to tell down home. The South, for filmmaker James Herbert, is an over-ripened place of "kudzu and sweat," where inspiration is in the paint peeling off of decayed and aging buildings, and the land creeps with "a strangulation of vegetation." It's a locale still haunted by the gothic vibes that shaped the fiction of writers like Flannery O'Connor. Herbert, who has lived since the dawn of the 1960s in the college town of Athens, Georgia, is an outsider—he hails from New England—in a region fabled for its own native outsiders. He makes visionary films awash in mood and texture and the voluptuous curves of the nudes he photographs and rephotographs.

Seventy miles west in Atlanta, Keith Ward and Tommy Burns produce and direct music videos for the latest wave of hip-hop acts. Most notable among the pair's dozens of clips is their work with the Georgia-based Arrested Development. The rap group's socially conscious hit "Mr. Wendal" gave Ward and Burns a chance to break out of the standard format for rap videos, rooted in the kinetic mode of 1940s musicals and industry perceptions that black audiences are interested only in seeing stars sing and dance. The notion, both men complain, is that black audiences won't tolerate inventive concepts or visual and narrative experimentation—pretty much what Hollywood told Julie Dash about *Daughters of the Dust*, a film on which the two worked as assistants. These are key components of the films Ward and Burns plan to produce and direct, separately and in tandem. Taking a cue from the liberating flow of images that comprised *Daughters*, the filmmakers have deliberately not plugged into the popular circuit of urban-macho-crisis dramas—the cycle that most recently produced *Menace II Society*. As they say, "We've never done a film in the 'hood."

Two poles, not so far apart: Herbert embraces a South permanently out of time; Ward and Burns literally can bank their filmmaking careers on the timeliness of Atlanta's arrival as a black music capitol and media hub with a thriving community of young African American film- and videomakers.

Yet, in terms of aesthetics and ambition, there is a link (beyond the fact that Herbert also has shot music videos for longtime associates R.E.M. and the B-52s). It's a sense of being and working in the South that is reflected in attitude and style—a feeling of geographic isolation from New York, and especially Los Angeles, that fosters determination and a drive for self-definition in fresh terms, however idiosyncratic.

This inner coherence extends across work in the region, whether it's traditional or experimental documentary, musical features, or avant-garde narratives. New Orleans-based filmmaker Stevenson Palfi, who is completing the feature-length *Songwriter: Unknown*, on the prolific but reticent Crescent City producer and tunesmith Allen Toussaint, quotes his subject. "Allen says it best: 'People move a different pace, at a different rhythm,' and because of that, the culture is different, the lifestyle is different. New Orleans is the only place for me to work best as a documentarian, because I can absorb all that. The colors change as the rhythms change."

Few filmmakers in the South seem as aware of this as the team of Burns and Ward. Since their work on *Daughters of the Dust*, which was filmed on the coast of South Carolina, the pair has launched separate production companies (Ward's West Side Stories and Burns' Free World Pictures) and has become immersed in music videos; they've shot more than 40, mostly for rap and R&B acts, as a way to build resumes and bank accounts to support the unconventional narrative work both men intend to further develop next year.

"When we deal with our own work, what you see comes from a black perspective," says Ward, who hopes to begin filming *Miracle in a Corridor* next spring in Atlanta, one of several varied projects both he and Burns have



Georgia folk artist and fortune-teller Eddie Owens Martin built his own temple and founded his own religion, Pasaqoyanism. His surreal life is the subject of *The Pasaquoyan*, by native son Doug Loggins, who plans to further document the region's folk artists and free-style visionaries.

Courtesy filmmaker

been developing and redeveloping in the past couple of years. "That doesn't necessarily mean you're gonna have some Klan guys riding off and someone rising up to fight against that. It means there are voices and perspectives that are unique to black people, in that diversity that black people have.

"The intelligence of the black audience is underestimated, so work that gets backed by the studios is based on perceptions of how astute that audience is." Ward likens his script to the macabre tone and hyper-stylized visual sense of a *Barton Fink* or *Delicatessen*, but with a deeper level that "shows how society is desensitized to something like death."

Shooting in Atlanta is an advantage. Ward and Burns have established a commercial and creative base and have access to a strong local talent pool that includes luminaries such as Bill Nunn (Radio Raheem in *Do the Right Thing*) and rapper Speech of Arrested Development. "Being in the South has been helpful," Ward says. "It's been easier to practice film without the pressures of a deadline at nine in the morning."

Which doesn't mean there aren't dues to pay. "What we did was basically create our own loop," says Burns, who got to know Ward when they worked together on the set of Spike Lee's *School Daze*, shot at the Atlanta University Center. Burns has his own film in the works, *Yardbird's Vamp*, a bebop-to-hip-hop meditation haunted by Charlie Parker's ghost and based on an original drama by Robert Earl Price. "A lot of people who wouldn't let us in the door are now knocking on ours. Some things have to do with being in the right place at the right time. Luckily, we're comfortable here. It's the environment that nurtured us as filmmakers."

The influence of Julie Dash on the pair isn't immediately evident in their videos, visually sophisticated as they are within the constraints imposed by the record companies. (The filmmakers enjoy more conceptual freedom working with an Anglo fashionplate act like Duran Duran than, say, Kris Kross.) But it's there—in a heightened awareness of music industry sexism, in a subversive, stubborn desire to weave visual ideas between the endless crosscutting and speedy edits of the form, and particularly in Dash's advice that the filmmakers not hurry work into a fickle marketplace before its time.

"It's cool, because she's coming from a feminine perspective. A lot of things we do, we say, what would Julie say? She's a great influece, just on the consciousness of your work," says Burns. And as a determined role model.

"I really want to stay independent," says Ward. "Like John Sayles. He's able to get $2-3 million for his films, do the film, get it seen, and make some money. On a higher level that's a success story for being an independent. We want to help other independents realize that you don't have to starve to do this."

South Carolina native Ellen Sumter, now based in New York where she teaches film at Hunter College, is another filmmaker in what might be termed an alternative or visionary or non-'hood stream in African American indie work. Her upcoming project *Southern Cross*, to be shot next summer in rural South Carolina, reverses the trajectory suggested in *Daughters*. Sumter's characters, urban blacks from the North, most on society's fringes, return to Southern roots, only to clash with them.

A series of vignettes linked by a central character, an undertaker/spiritualist named Josephine, *Southern Cross*' "quasi-true" stories deal with a conflict that Sumter understands well. "Once you leave the Southeast and go to the cities, it does change you in ways people you left behind cannot understand. There's a loss of a certain innocence, a disconnection. It's a disconnectedness I feel with some of my friends." In shooting the character-driven film, which Sumter cast in Atlanta, the filmmaker will become an example of her own stories. The South, she says, "is all I know in terms of my expression as an artist. I spent the first 18 years of my life there, and it molded the way I see."

Another sort of culture clash informs works-in-progress by Nancy Kalow in North Carolina and the team of Eric Mofford and David Zeiger in Atlanta, filmmakers who are striving to document the experiences and expressions of Mexican and Southeast Asian immigrants in parts of the South unaccustomed to their rising numbers.

"The immigrant movement is nothing new, but it's something new for the South," says Mofford, who is seeking funding for *Displaced in the New South*. Mofford is an assistant director and locations scout (his credits include such Atlanta-shot matinee romps as *Basket Case 3* and *Pet Semetary 2*) who is making his first documentary with photographer Zeiger, whose work in the city's sizable Southeast Asian and Mexican communities prompted the project. "Per capita, there's been the largest change here in the

Immigration in the South has changed the region's demographics proportionately more than anywhere else in the U.S. In *Displaced in the New South*, filmmaker Eric Mofford teams up with photographer David Zeiger to look at Atlanta's sizable Southeast Asian and Mexican communities.

Photo: David Zeiger

The rich musical heritage of the South has provided fertile ground for numerous music video producers and documentarians. Stevenson Palfi has spent much of the past decade filming New Orlean's musical talent. His latest work, *Songwriter: Unknown*, focuses on the prolific and private writer/producer Allen Toussaint, here accompanying Aaron Neville and Rita Coolidge.

Photo: Marta, courtesy filmmaker



last 10 years than anywhere else in the United States," Mofford notes. "It's interesting. One house we were at, the family had a Buddha next to a picture of Elvis. That's sort of the epitome."

Kalow, a folklorist/documentarian best known for *Sadobabies* and its sequel, *The Loser's Club* (both about the culture of street kids), is interacting with two distinct Southern groups in separate projects that have been underway since the late 1980s. Working in Beta SP and in tandem with folklorist Martha Nelson, Kalow has been collecting folklife documentation of Mexican migrants in North Carolina since 1987, experimenting with nonlinear editing on an Avid system. Kalow's second work-in-progress she terms a "big documentary" on the black Primitive Baptist community. The piece involves a now-18-year-old member of that community, Angie Lee, to whom Kalow loaned a camcorder two years ago. "It's about how someone who is 16 years old chooses to document her life," Kalow says.

"I'm coming at it from the point of view of an expressive culture," the Durham-based filmmaker continues. "That means not showing only the conditions of the laborers in the traditional *Harvest of Shame* way—I'm not interested in doing that."

In making the documentaries, tentatively titled *Tabacoso* and *Daddy Was a Primitive*, Kalow tries to avoid the trap of a camera-toting outsider trying to get a grip on some perceived "exotic" subculture. "What I do is try to take concrete steps to make sure that people in the communities have my



footage," Kalow says. "The footage I've given out takes on a life of its own. It goes to places like nursing homes, where people watch it over and over." The VHS distribution, "kind of like home movies at this stage," is for Kalow a "very concrete" method of meeting her subjects halfway. "It doesn't matter how I feel or how I've been trained. It's what they get out of it."

Down in New Orleans, filmmaker Stevenson Palfi has devoted much of the past decade to documenting the city's motherlode of musical talent and tradition—much of it neglected, obscure, and underappreciated. His *Piano Players Rarely Ever Play Together* (1984) captures uncommon performance footage of Crescent City piano master Professor Longhair, whose sudden death in the middle of the production turned the film into a poignant, finally triumphant elegy—not just for Longhair, but for the great lineage of New Orleans musicians who preceded him.

Songwriter: Unknown, Palfi's follow-up, is a documentary posed as a mystery that progressively uncovers the identity of the prolific and deceptively pervasive Allen Toussaint, a shy studio genius whose unseen hand is behind hundreds of hit songs he's written and produced in a career that stretches back to the 1950s.

Palfi started shooting the piece in 1986 and is now editing a version for England's Channel 4, which has a long relationship with the filmmaker and purchased broadcast rights to the film in a $70,000 presale. With a few other exceptions, funding has been scarce, he complains. "There should be a lot more," Palfi says. "There's no support system aside from two media arts centers that have equipment and generate a lot of activity," he notes, referring to the Louisiana Center for Cultural Communications and the New Orleans Video Access Center. "But to do a national broadcast documentary, all the support systems are missing. There's no money.

"I live here but I don't live here," Palfi continues. "My work is shown all over the place, but it's harder to get my work shown here than in other places—unless I give it away." It's a double-edged situation. "Creatively, this is the place for me. Financially, I'd rather be anyplace but. It's hard to be creative when there's no money. I'm going to L.A. next week to talk to an agent."

Palfi also argues against being tagged as a regional artist. "That regional



Ruby in Paradise, Victor Nunez's subtly nuanced feature set in Florida's "Redneck Riviera," stars Ashley Judd, daughter of country western singer Naomi Judd, and cinematographer-turned-actor Todd Field. (right): Ruby girds herself for the ongoing harrassment and threatening advances of her boss' son (Bentley Mitchum).

Courtesy October Films

label I find insulting. If it's a work done about the South, it gets characterized as regional; if it's about the South Bronx, it can be broadcast nationally. There was a golden era in the 1980s when there was more parity. Then funding dried up all over the country, and, because of that, people [on grants panels] are becoming much more protective of their own."

Again, though, as Palfi and other filmmakers agree, geographic isolation is a sort of necessary condition for producing distinctive work. "I'm very attracted to that whole aspect of finding out the things that are special about the South," says Doug Loggins, a film- and videomaker whose first documentary, *The Pasaquoyan* (1993), latches onto the life and legend of visionary, folk artist, and fortune-teller Eddie Owens Martin of Buena Vista, Georgia. Martin, born with the century on July 4 and dead by his own hand in 1986, was a celebrated eccentric and singular creature of self-invention who founded his own religion—Pasaquoyanism—and built his own temple on a sprawling four acre plot once owned by his mother.

The fantastic site, a kind of Lost City built atop red clay, is a surreal vision of one man's obsessions. "Eddie's vision was to turn his life into a movie," says Loggins, whose bare-bones budget compelled him to make inventive use of available resources. He mixes trippy, experimental super 8 film footage of Pasaquan—oddly suggestive of a Kenneth Anger dream sequence—with more conventional interviews, old films of an incantatory Eddie performing at an Atlanta rock gig, and now-ghostly audio of the artist talking with his Boswell, Tom Patterson, who compiled the oral biography *St. Eom in the Land of Pasaquan*.

Loggins, a veteran of local cable access channels, hopes to find video distribution for his film and is looking ahead to further documentation of the region's folk artists and free-style visionaries. "My roots are here, but I don't feel like I'm that close to the country feel of it," he says. "Sometimes I feel like an outsider because I came from an urban situation. I'm reaching back to my father's world. He came up as a sharecropper."

Victor Nunez, whose family hails from the South Florida orange grove town of Haines City, can draw on authentic roots in the region. A 1960s graduate of UCLA film school, he's made a seemingly quixotic career as a outsider to Hollywood, where "I always felt like I was trained for the 100-yard dash, but there was no Olympics." Nunez's last three films (*Gal Young Un*, *A Flash of Green*, and *Ruby in Paradise*) form a trilogy about North Florida—where he lives and works.

"Each film is in a way about the Florida myth," Nunez says, during the same week a German tourist was killed in Miami. "I mean, of all the places in the world to come, why Miami? Florida still has this magic. Ponce De Leon, the fountain of youth, etc."

The notion of Florida as "paradise" for Nunez's heroine Ruby is ripe with irony. As played by Ashley Judd and revealed through extensive use of narration as internal monologue, Ruby flees a dead-end life in Tennessee for the beach resort town of Panama City—a tacky jewel on the "Redneck Riviera," where she seeks both a new life and a direction to take it in. Shot at the beginning of an unseasonably cool spring, the film offers the city as an oddly captivating ghost town, a patch of Americana as depopulated as the South Florida of Jim Jarmusch's *Stranger than Paradise*.

"Panama City, to me still, is postmodern America stripped of any pretense," Nunez says. "MoMA and Lincoln Center aren't there. All you have are palmettos and modern stucco....It's the kind of place outsiders love to hate, but if you're here long enough you appreciate the levels and the resonance."

Shooting in super 16 and using a Macintosh digital sound editing system, Nunez was able to complete the film for $350,000 with other costs deferred and points offered to cast and crew. "*Ruby* technically looks rough; we shot it on the fly," says the director. "But whenever an image was about to look too beautiful, I would stick something in front of it, like an ice machine or a garbage can.

"I still believe film can be done anywhere with very limited means," he continues. "There's no real mystery to the process. It's a series of human experiences that all add up to something... In the sixties, if you had a used Bolex, you were a filmmaker."

It's a necessary attitude for independent filmmakers who choose to work in the South, adhering to a personal vision that pays its own dividends.

Interestingly, Nunez may shoot his next film in New Mexico. "Every movie I've ever made, where I shot is gone now," he says, more observant than most residents of Florida's rapid development. As he notes of the myth that summons Ruby south from Tennessee, "This is paradise because there is nowhere else to go."

Steve Dollar is from Tallahassee and writes about pop culture for the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

LOOKING FORWARD, TURNING BACK

Montage '93: Festival of the Image

BRIAN GOLDFARB AND
LAURA U. MARKS

MONTAGE 93
INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF THE IMAGE
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK USA

True to its name, the Montage '93: Festival of the Image in Rochester, New York, spliced together a multifarious array of exhibitions, screenings, lectures, and panel discussions—events often related only in that they involve "the image." Organized by an unlikely crew of artworld types and business execs and headed by Nathan Lyons of the Visual Studies Workshop, the festival was an eclectic mix of art, popular culture, and corporate media technology displays. With a $1 million-plus budget, largely from Rochester-area imaging technology businesses like Kodak, Bausch and Lomb, and Xerox Corporation, the festival entertained a broad range of participants (including business execs, investors, artists, academics, and the Rochester-area public) in schools, hotels, and corporate offices throughout the city. Montage catered to all of these sectors with events ranging from independent film and video series to presentations of specialized technologies (e.g., the fundamentals of bar code information theory).

Festival literature implied that there would be a focus on new imaging technologies, such as virtual reality and interactive television, with brochures inviting viewers to "spend a day in the future with Montage '93." Oddly, in a celebration of all that is digital, virtual, and subject to electromagnetic manipulation, the programmers chose to name this festival "Montage," after the most material and hands-on of image-making practices. One can only imagine that the title was meant to allude to the mixed-bag quality of the festival, which spanned the technologically new (teleconferencing, hyperspace) and the traditional (issues in photo history and archiving).

This expansive scope led many to wonder about the usefulness of organizing around a concept as broad as "the image" and whether it's possible to maintain coherency around something as pervasive as visual technology. Still, "a day in the future with Montage" was useful in that it showed, once again, that the most interesting part of new technology is not the tools, but their specific cultural uses, particularly in traditionally underfunded areas like independent film and video, activist art, and public school education.

The Education Media Arts Forum

The three-day Education Media Arts Forum provided a rare opportunity for discussion about media technology in K-12 education. The forum brought together educators, students, media producers, and academic theorists to discuss such issues as the politics of classroom production, critical viewing skills, and the potential uses of interactive and digital technology. Participants saw tapes from schools in the U.S., England, and Finland, but unfortunately, no Third World countries were represented.

The most interesting presentations used video and computer imaging systems to generate new modes of dialogue within communities not previously involved in media production. These works demonstrated the untapped potential uses of visual technology to generate a multicultural curriculum informed by local and popular cultures, taking education beyond the classroom.



Sexuality and HIV are the topic of *The F.A.B. Room*, an interactive computer-based drama that encourages learning through role-playing.

Courtesy Brian Goldfarb

Some used commonplace technology (e.g., camcorders) in far-sighted ways, as was demonstrated in workshops like Critical Thinking Curriculum in Video Production for Inner City Youth. Conducted by educator Tony Streit and youth producers Edgar Davis and Ellsio Allcea of the Community Television Network (CTVN) in Chicago, the workshop and video clips showed how CTVN youth producers base their work on the culture of their own communities, using mainstream television as a counterpoint in tapes that teach critical media viewing. The audience watched segments of *Hard Cover*, a cable access series produced by CTVN youth that has been on the air since 1987 and has over 150 programs.

On another panel, West Coast educators Martha Chono-Helsley, Gina Lamb, and Beverly Ginsberg discussed teaching and producing alternative television. Helsley, director of VidKidCo in Long Beach, California, showed 16-year-old Kimiko Roberts' *Cultural Identity Crisis of an All American Girl*, an autobiographical tape about growing up in a culture that refuses to recognize the reality of having a "mixed" (Japanese and African American) heritage. Lamb, who works with the LA-based Humanitas Media Arts Mobilization Project, presented *Media Hype Stereotype*, a documentary by youth from South Central LA that shows how the mainstream media turned their neighborhood into a national icon of violence. Lamb also showed *The Missing Latina*, a humorous tape by high school students Marisela Gomez and Emily Castillo that considers the absence of Latinas in television programming.

A project by patients at the Children's Hospital Los Angeles (produced through the Mark Taper Artist Program) demonstrated how video production can be a therapeutic tool, facilitating communication among the children patients who are physically isolated from their peers. Use of the hospital's closed-circuit TV system and mobile equipment carts gave all patients the opportunity to participate in the production of a tape that included interviews, patient-produced artwork, and storytelling. Here relatively low-tech video approximates some of the uses of high-tech interactive computer technologies.

The potential for high-tech imaging systems in the classroom was evident in one panel, in which British educators demonstrated some spectacular new computer-based media productions. British media education has been institutionalized nationally, so teachers in England have relatively



Print by Michael Brodsky for *Iterations*, an exhibition at Montage that explored the role of electronic media in the art world, visual communications, and popular culture.

Courtesy Montage

better support and resources than their U.S. counterparts. Frank Boyd of the Art and Technology Education Center (ARTEC), an East London-based center where educators and students are trained in digital media production, showed a number of student-produced interactive programs. One such work, *The FAB Room*, produced with students at Jubilee Arts in Birmingham, is part of a peer-education project on HIV being developed for the Sandwell Area Health Authority in Birmingham. The work is a computer-based interactive drama in which users enter rooms, such as a virtual cafe, where they can role-play to learn about sexuality. Once in the FAB room (which stands for Females Answer Back), a viewer can click the mouse on images of a television, a painting, or a radio to see students' digitized videos or paintings, or hear rap music on the subject of sexuality and HIV.

Finding funds for equipment and projects, even those not nearly as high-tech as *The FAB Room*, has been a major problem for U.S. media educators. Assessment of classroom performance is a key factor. Without an accepted method of assessing (i.e., grading) a student's production activities, media programs don't attain credibility in the eyes of state funders. David Goodman, Michelle Hernandez, and Pam Sporn of the Educational Video Center in New York City addressed this topic by outlining a model portfolio review program [see "The Tape's Great, But What Did They Learn?," August/September 1993]. EVC's newsletter, *Video & Learning*, has also been a crucial source of information and ideas about incorporating video into the school curricula.

The forum was not the only place where media education was on the table. Many exhibits at Montage's trade show also vied for educators' attention. But here one was reminded of the heavy corporate involvement in Montage. There was, for instance, a display by the Greater Rochester Cablevision (a Time Warner affiliate) and Rochester Telephone called Forward-looking Interactive Education. This featured classrooms networks through long-distance, closed-circuit technology—an approach which is hardly new. This sort of two-way communication is a concept that educational and public access producers have long advocated.

The cable company's true agenda for the future was across the hall in its other presentation, GRC's New Vision. Here one could preview the services that Time Warner will offer Rochester cable subscribers in the near future. This service upgrade was promoted as featuring an educational component: on-line reference sources that can be accessed for a fee—once again illustrating how high technology is most often accessible only to those who can afford it. GRC touted the service as interactive TV, but interaction appeared to be a euphemism for consumerism. GRC/Time Warner's display makes plain the nature of corporate interest in issues like media education. Their idea of pedagogy is borrowed from pay-per-view and the shopping channels.

New technologies, new uses

The artworks produced with the new technologies are terribly rudimentary compared to military, industrial, and commercial applications of these media. But artists and other experimenters usually have last dibs on how these technologies are to be used. Virtual reality, on-line communication, hypermedia, and other computer-based forms were shaped from their inception by the exigencies of their military and industrial developers. Virtual reality (VR), for instance, was developed as a bloodless training ground for bomber pilots. This template was still evident in the recreational VR machines that Montage visitors got to try. The VR participant, be-goggled and strapped into a gyroscope, experienced flying through mysterious channels and encountering fantastical creatures—which he or she was supposed to *kill*. Is this our brave new future?

Trickle-down is the main way that expensive high-tech gear reaches a general audience of users. But the way technologies are developed in our capitalist system inhibits alternative uses as recreational or educational tools. At an early point in their development, many features are hard-wired into these technologies. If and when these media "trickle down" to artists, teachers, and other users,

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they have to live with these biases unless they have the time and knowledge to try to disarm them.

However, some things at Montage '93 convinced me that the movement of technology from the military-industrial complex to "us" is not inevitably trickle down: It's really a two-way street. The most exciting interface in the whole festival was between the corporate trade show at the Rochester Riverside Convention Center and, one floor down, the Arts and Technology Exposition. On the top floor were products with provocative applications, from digital retouching to medical imaging to aerial surveillance. Downstairs, artists demonstrated how they could apply these technologies differently. Experimental Television Center of Owego, New York, exhibited a range of devices, many "obsolete" by industry standards, that have been redesigned by artists-in-residence at ETC. Beginning with the Paik-Abe "Wobulator" (circa 1968) and going up to the Amiga and other contemporary digital and analog systems, the imaging tools at ETC have yielded, on the cheap, some of the most visually exciting work in contemporary video. Engineers who were working at the trade show exhibits trickled down to ETC's demo to remark longingly that they'd wanted to pursue some of these avenues, but their companies had moved them to other projects.

Also in the Arts and Tech Fair was the latest laser disk installation by Grahame Weinbren, still one of the most intelligent explorers of interactive media. Weinbren's interactive video *Sonata* was on display in the exhibition Iterations at Rochester's Memorial Art Gallery (which travels to the International Center for Photography—Midtown in New York City from October 16 - January 21). Based on a short story by Tolstoy called *The Kreutzer Sonata*, Weinbren's *Sonata* allows the viewer to switch narrative tracks by touching the screen, so that, for example, you can see a character's interior monologue. But Weinbren does not promote the illusion that the artist working in interactive media relinquishes control to the viewer. If anything, the artist must take on *more* control to ensure that the story paths stay interesting. Again it is artists who provide some of the most critical uses of new technologies, here pushing the notion of interactivity to mean more than consumerist "choice."

Another artist who works this cusp between technological and artistic innovation is virtual reality designer Brenda Laurel. Laurel, who is immersed in the high-stakes world of entertainment technologies (she started out directing video games for Atari), had some provocative, if not quite convincing, suggestions about making these products more constructively interactive. Currently Laurel is collaborating with some kindergarteners on a VR program called Vivarium, which is loosely based on Native American stories. A participant might take on the form of a spider or a crow and has the opportunity to contribute to the program's stories. In its formative stages, Vivarium seems more about magical

storytelling than about keeping your body intact while firing upon hapless monsters.

Celluloid and change

Film, resolutely analog material that it is, was marginalized at Montage '93. The panel on The Future of Independent Cinema, curiously, was composed entirely of film curators: Jan-Christopher Horak of the George Eastman House in Rochester. Alissa Simon of the Art Institute of Chicago's Film Center, Ronny Loewy of the Deutsches Film Museum in Frankfurt, and Jürgen Berger of the British Film Institute. All four shared a deep pessimism about the hegemony of U.S. commercial cinema, the lack of proper film archiving, and dwindling audiences, as well as a distaste for videotape in any form. Ironically, it was audience members who, as makers and teachers, spoke up to defend video as cheaper than film and enabling self-distribution, among other things. Given the power of curators to make independent work visible (or not) to audiences, some of the speakers' ignorance concerning issues affecting filmmakers was quite alarming. Simon, in particular, airily dismissed the entire circuit of non-commercial film festivals, such as Chicago's Women in the Director's Chair, as merely a showcase for "bad films" that couldn't find distributors. This attitude was especially frustrating given the Film Center's remarkable success with audience development.

On the up side for independents, the Montage film program curated by Horak offered one of the most productive critical perspectives on new media. Horak chose works that deal with new technologies by either rejection, subversion, or willful regression. The unconventional approach to imaging tools that places like ETC facilitate was also at work in films like David Blair's *WAX*, or *The Discovery of Television Among the Bees* and Bruce Elder's *Flesh Angels*, both of which combine computer animation with found footage in a way that makes the slickest technologies look chintzy. Other works revel in technology's new lows, such as the Pixelvision feature *Another Girl, Another Planet* by Michael Almereyda.

Still others address the structural exclusion of certain filmmakers from the industry, such as Patricia Martinez de Velasco's *Matilde Landeta*, about the pioneering Mexican filmmaker whose gender kept her out of the loop for 40 years.

Horak's programming amplified the point many Montage viewers took home: The new media do not enforce an ever-onward progress of more sophisticated images, but rather they establish the next point in a spiral that turns on glances backward as much as on forward-looking technologies.

Brian Goldfarb is an artist, educator, and media producer currently working on a Ph.D. in Visual and Cultural Studies at the University of Rochester. Laura U. Marks is a writer and film programmer living in Rochester.

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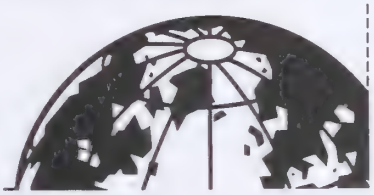
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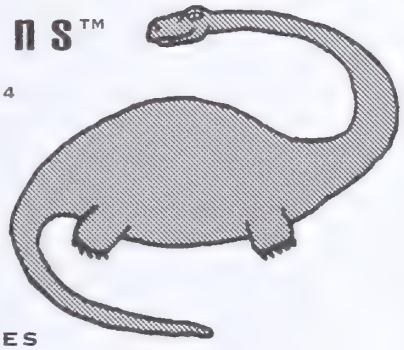
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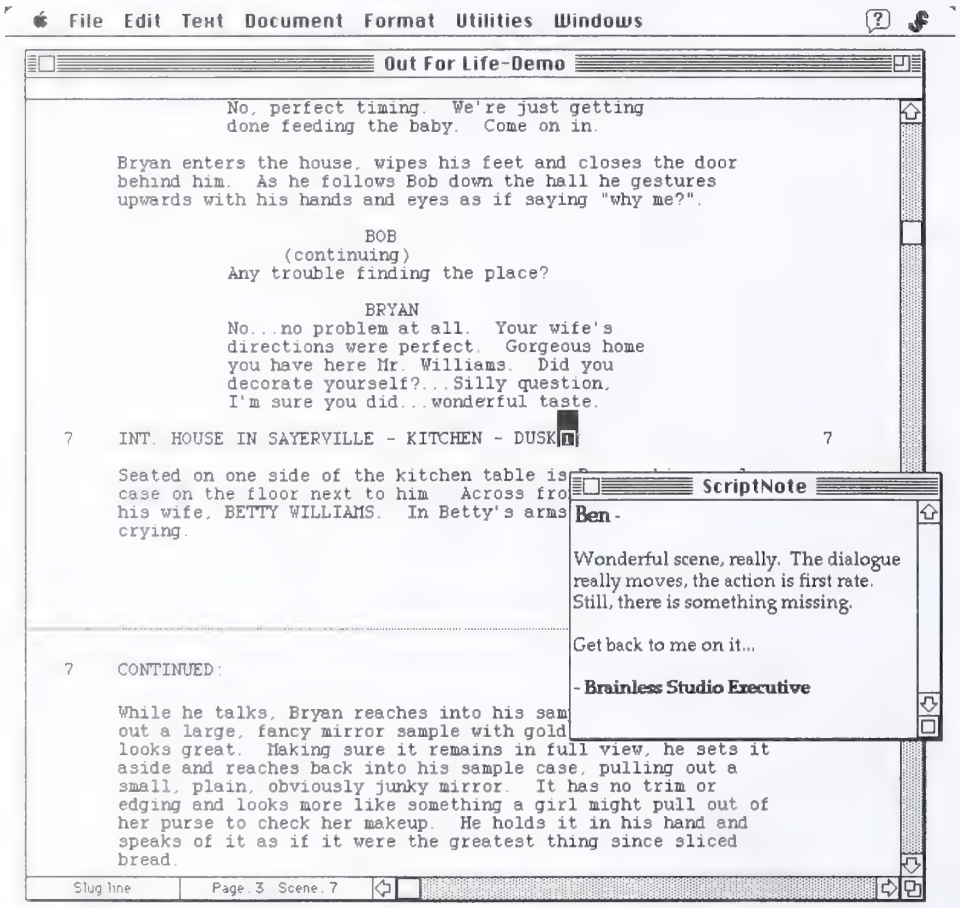
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New Software Programs Help Screenwriters Master the Craft

BRIAN EDGAR

With the plethora of computer software programs on the market, it is not surprising that a growing number are aimed at the screenplay writer. Like the many seminars and workshops that promise to help you write your script, the new screenwriting software eagerly promotes the same.



"ScriptNotes," acting like post-it notes for the computer, are an added feature of Final Draft, one of the new line of expanded screenplay software programs.

Courtesy MacToolKit

In the early eighties, the prototype screenplay software was introduced: Scriptor, a PC program that automatically formats scripts to the film industry standard. For about seven years, Scriptor was the only program of its kind, until another formatting program, Movie Master, appeared. Both programs continue to be used by the industry. Scriptor is still very popular because of its ability to import text from any number of other word processing programs, while Movie Master, a DOS program, has a built-in word processor for conforming text.

Recently a new generation of expanded screenplay programs has surfaced. This advanced software includes not only powerful formatting word processors, but also story development programs designed to help the writer with a number of creative tasks, from plot structure to character development.

Final Draft

Final Draft is a "stand-alone" word processor that automatically conforms scripts to film industry standards, enabling one to dive in and focus on the writing. It is, in fact, a wonderful tool, freeing the writer from the tediousness and uncertainty of formatting a script and then reconforming it during the rewrites. While the original programs could set formats and margins for the various script elements, create character lists, and paginate page breaks, Final Draft has expanded these features considerably.

Three sets of macros, activated by the function keys, engage virtually every element needed in a screenplay: Slug Lines (also called Screen Headings), Action, Character, Dialogue, Interior/Exterior, Day and Night, and Scene Transitions. Final Draft also adds some nice variations, including Sunrise and Magic (for magic hour). After typing in a specific element, pressing the RETURN key will automatically send the cursor to the next logical place—so Character moves to Dialogue, Transitions shift to Slug Lines, Slug Lines to Action. This feature can be further expanded using a programmable Shortcuts feature. Margins are preset and spacing is done automatically, so once you become familiar with the macros, the mechanics and speed of writing flow remarkably smoothly.

Final Draft has a master Character List for your characters' names, which it checks whenever a character is to be entered. Once the first letter or two is typed in, the rest of the name appears, which is particularly good if you have characters with names like Raskolnikov or Running Black Horse. The program also lets you enter new names directly into the script, which then become part of the master list.

Once you get past that daunting first page of your screenplay, Final Draft automatically creates page breaks, inserting More and Continued at the bottom and top of pages, carrying scene numbers and headers over to the next page, and continuing the scene or character/dialogue breaks in proper form. Final Draft also displays the running page and scene number at the bottom of the

screen, so at a glance you know where you are.

Other features include a versatile Element Style sheet, which will instantaneously conform a screenplay to television or theatrical standards, or allow you to customize your own formats and styles. A clever ScriptNote function, which acts like a computer post-it note, allows you to open a pop-up window anywhere in the script and type in ideas, notations, or comments (this feature is almost as good as scribbling in the margins). Final Draft includes a 120,000 word spell-checker, an expansive thesaurus, and a Print Preview for checking the look of the script prior to printing.

The program will also import files from other word processors and scriptwriting programs, including Microsoft Word and Scriptor, using a Text-File Converter. Finally, if your screenplay reaches that rarified world of production, revisions will surely follow. Final Draft includes an "A" and "B" pages command, which "locks" the script at the top of each page and allows for changes to be carried over to a supplementary "A" page. This way only the pages with changes are reprinted, leaving the rest of the script consistent with earlier drafts.

Final Draft 2.04, designed for the Mac, sells for $349 and is available through: MacToolKit, 1234 Sixth St., Ste. 204, Santa Monica, CA 90401; (310) 395-4242

Scriptware

For PC aficionados, a new software called Scriptware may become the program of choice. Scriptware is a DOS formatting program which incorporates nearly all of the features of Final Draft, as well as some unique ones. It, too, is a powerful word processor that formats and paginates screenplays to professional industry standards. Probably the most flexible program of its kind on the market, it will also let you write treatments, outlines, and letters. Dialogue Boxes, which operate as a kind of programmable control center, perform much of Scriptware's functions and allow one to set up many options.

At the heart of this software is a unique system called Scriptype. Rather than using function keys and macros to input script elements, Scriptype employs the ENTER key in combination with another key. ENTER will take you from Character to Dialogue, while ENTER and TAB will move from Character to Parenthetical; SHIFT/ENTER creates a Scene Heading, while ALT/ENTER becomes a Shot, etc. The makers claim this is the fastest system that exists for formatting, although I found Final Draft equally quick. (Scriptware also allows you to use function keys and macros, if desired.) Ultimately, it is apples and oranges; both systems are excellent, dramatically simplifying what used to be painstaking, laborious work.

Scriptware utilizes File Boxes and Lists to speed the writing process, letting you move easily from one area of the program to another. One very good feature is a Dialogue Box that keeps a running list of scenes, by number and description. You can use this for at-a-glance reference or, by clicking on a specific scene, Scriptware will instantly jump to this scene. The program also has a Format Types Box for reconforming a script into such diverse formats as Film-Submit, Film-Shooting, TV Sitcom, TV Standard, or Play.

> A new line of screenwriting software is designed to assist with the more creative end of writing.

The scriptware includes a spell-check dictionary of more than 80,000 words (and a thesaurus as part of a recent upgrade package), plus an "A" and "B" and Omitted Scenes and Pages feature. It will effortlessly import ASCII text files, as well as texts from programs like Scriptor and Collaborator.

Scriptware is currently available for IBM and PCs, with a version for Macintosh in the works. Scriptware 1.28 sells for $299 and is available from Cinovation, Inc., 204 W. 20th St., Ste. 37, New York, NY 10011; (212) 924-4474.

Plots Unlimited

While Final Draft and Scriptware help with the mechanics of scriptwriting, another new set of programs is designed to assist with the more creative end of writing.

If you are facing the problem of a blank page (or screen), a program called Plots Unlimited has been created to help brainstorm ideas for story and plot. Described by its maker, Tom Sawyer, as "a kind of thesaurus of plot fragments," Plots Unlimited uses a powerful database containing over 5,600 "conflict situations" that become the architecture for developing a plot outline.

The program begins by offering seven menu-driven Plot Methods for creating a story. After making a selection from categories like Character Combination, Story Type, or Master Plot, Plots Unlimited asks you to make specific choices that will produce any number of conflict scenarios. Using the Aristotelian concept that conflict is the essence of drama, these Initial Conflicts become the building blocks for developing a plot outline. A Plot Expansion feature serves as the engine room of Plots Unlimited, pulling up conflict possibilities from any of the Plot Methods chosen and allowing you to pursue the various directions in which your story might go. One nice feature of this program is its ability to integrate multiple plot lines. A Notepad feature allows you to flesh out, edit, or modify a plot idea, which can then be exported into a word processor.

The biggest limitation of Plots Unlimited is the inability to allow you to create your own specific conflict scenarios. You are locked into the generic examples that exist in the database, which, although numerous (602 conflict situations exist for Character Combination), finally feel limiting because you cannot modify or add to them. And once certain parameters are chosen, such as an additional character, the conflict options quickly narrow—so what began as hundreds or even thousands of choices in plot development suddenly is reduced to eight or three. But, as the makers say, "The program's primary function is to augment and stimulate your creativity." Plots Unlimited can be a useful springboard for beginning writers or professionals stuck in writers' block.

Plots Unlimited is available in both Macintosh and IBM versions. Plots Unlimited 1.04 is $399 and available through: Ashleywilde Publishers, 23715 West Malibu Road, Ste. 132, Malibu, California 90265; (310) 456-1277, (800) 833-PLOT.

StoryLine

Truby's StoryLine is an interactive program that challenges you to create and polish all the elements that make up a good story. Designed as a creative aid for screenplays, novels, plays, short stories, and television scripts, StoryLine is based on a 22-step approach to story structure taught by its creator, John Truby.

StoryLine sets up an architecture in which the detailed "grammar of drama" is built. It provides a menu-driven Master Script File which is broken down into a number of sections, each reflecting an aspect of the story. While some sections are designed for brainstorming (e.g. Premise Pad, Action Tracks, Scene Outline), it is more detailed sections, like Premise, Seven Steps, World Sequence, Visual Tracks, and 22 Steps, where an outline can be worked through.

After the Premise section asks you what your story is about, StoryLine has you create a dramatic structure based on character. In Seven Steps, the nucleus of story is broken down into seven successive parts, from Problem/Need to New Equilibrium. This becomes the dramatic spine of your script, incorporating elements like the psychological makeup of the protagonist, character overviews, conflicts, and thematic variations. As you progress, other sections help you shape the story: World Sequence lets you create the power structure, logic, and values of this world, Visual Tracks helps you clarify a visual continuity, and 22 Steps allows you to further develop your characters and plot and define the moral heart of your drama. Using the first draft of a script I just completed, I ran it through the paces of StoryLine and, must say, it is an excellent tool. I quickly became aware of my script's weaknesses and strengths and more conscious of what needs to be done to improve it.

StoryLine lets you move freely between different files, and material entered into one file is

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automatically copied into another. A very good supplemental feature is the Examples file, which contains a detailed structural break-down of four successful and very different stories: *A Streetcar Named Desire*, *Heart of Darkness*, *Star Wars*, and *The Hunt for Red October*. In addition, an On-Line Analyst shows key errors that writers most often make throughout the writing process, with questions designed to keep you objective and on-track.

Even though StoryLine can be considered an advanced program, the manual, like the software, is very user-friendly and designed to walk the beginner through the process. It includes a guide for developing novels, plays, short stories, and television scripts, and a glossary of terms. Any working file can be printed, and StoryLine will export into any word processing program.

StoryLine sells for $295 and is available in Macintosh and IBM versions from: Truby's Writers Studio, 1739 Midvale Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90024; (310) 575-3058.

Collaborator

Another program aimed at story development is Collaborator II. Like StoryLine, Collaborator challenges you to develop and enhance your script's story and characters using interactive menu-driven operations.

Based on the classical three-act structure of drama, Collaborator runs through a list of more than 70 questions designed to help you create a detailed outline. Using Aristotle's six elements of drama, the program requires you to determine what kind of script you are writing: What is the theme? The main conflict? What is the point of attack? The protagonist's motivating goal? And so on.

As you go through this evaluation, a Global Outline is formed gradually which becomes the framework for your story and includes character conflicts, plot twists, climax, and resolution. In addition, a Character Profile section has you enter a detailed breakdown of characters (sex, weight, age, education, politics, sexual preference, etc), which is then used as part of the overall format.

Collaborator also features a useful reference for dramatic structure—a detailed analysis of the classic *It's a Wonderful Life*, found both in the program and the manual. Another bonus is the Index Card Management feature, which enables you to outline your script, scene by scene.

While different from StoryLine in dramatic theory and approach, Collaborator encourages the same end result—a well structured, multi-layered story. It is not as complex as StoryLine and is easier to use, providing a straight forward approach to what can be, especially in the conceptual stages of writing, a difficult mountain to scale.

Collaborator II sells for $329 and is available for both Macintosh and IBM from: Collaborator

Systems, Box 57557, Sherman Oaks, CA 91403; (800) 241-2655.

Dramatica

Finally, the newest program is Dramatica. Not on the market yet (its expected release date is in early May), the program is being promoted as "the single most useful storyforming tool ever created." Like StoryLine and Collaborator, Dramatica is designed to aid in the creative construction of story, character, and theme. The difference, claims creator Steven Greenfield, is that it "builds up, rather than breaks down" dramatic structure, letting you choose the path you want in creating a story, rather than responding to a pre-existing format. Dramatic allows you to approach a story from any of three areas—Character, Theme, and Plot—and each of these interacts with the others. For example, in the Plot mode, Dramatica will show you potential character and theme elements and how these can be worked into a rich story structure. Based on your choice of characters, a concise theme is then formed. In developing character, Dramatica integrates two methods. Storytelling (the traditional approach) explores the possible traits and personality of a character, while Storyforming is designed to create characters that have a dramatic function. These methods dovetail, providing the creation of a developed character that works within the dramatic fabric of plot and theme.

Once an outline is compiled, it can be viewed in a number of ways, depicting dramatic possibilities or a character's growth. Then, a Storyview function lets you select any combination of through-lines for comparing character, theme, and plot in terms of scenes, acts, pages, or running minutes.

One of the intriguing features promised with Dramatica is its ability to mirror the intuitive process. The program is designed to take the concepts and elements of your story and articulate what happen next. This is a capability not yet seen in a program and has generated both skepticism and serious interest, as it challenges existing approaches to story development.

Because the makers are still working on Dramatica, a copy was not available for this review. Dramatica will be available for both Macintosh and IBM with a projected cost of around $295. Screenplay Systems, Inc., 150 East Olive Ave., Ste. 203, Burbank, CA 91502; (818) 843-6557.

Fortunately, none of these scriptwriting programs will write scripts. That is still the domain of the writer. Viewed for what they are—tools which can dramatically speed the mechanics of formatting or offer aid in developing structure and story—this software can be a useful electronic ally in what, finally, is the creation of the artist.

Brian Edgar is an independent filmmaker and writer living in New York.

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THE WRITE STUFF

Legal Protection for Screenwriters

ROBERT L. SEIGEL

A few years ago, a writer told me she had written the story that served as the basis for the film *Ghost*, and that, although she had not met anyone connected with the film, "the studio ripped me off." I saw some irony in this claim since, as it so happened, I knew the screenwriter, Bruce Joel Rubin, and was certain that he had written *Ghost* without any knowledge of her work.

Although this writer's fears were misplaced, they are not uncommon, as ideas, stories, and screenplays are sometimes appropriated by others, either accidentally or on purpose. Many writers ask how they can protect their work from theft. The answer is that there is no guaranteed way, but there are certain measures a writer can take to make such appropriation less likely and easier to prove.

Protecting your work

The first rule to bear in mind is the basic tenet of copyright law: ideas are not copyrightable; the expressions of ideas are. So, for instance, the idea of a modern day theme park where dinosaurs roam is not protected under copyright law, but the expression of that idea, Michael Crichton's *Jurassic Park*, is. Treatments and outlines are more protectable than ideas, but less so than scripts. If a screenwriter wants to protect a work, then he or she should flesh out the story, characters, and themes as much as possible.

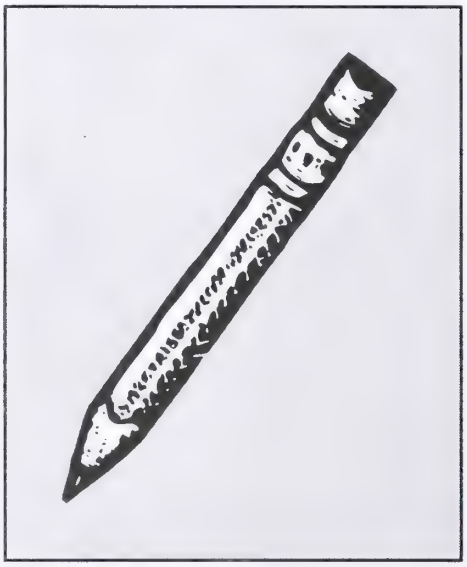
The next step is to register the work with the Writers Guild of America (WGA) and/or the United States Copyright Office. When a work is registered with the WGA, it is stamped with the date of registration and filed at the WGA offices. Although registration of a work with the WGA is not legal proof of authorship or ownership of the work, it can be used as evidence as to when a work was written. Registration is $10 by check for WGA members; nonmembers can register for $20 by money order or cashier's check for a period of 10 years, which may be renewed for another 10-year term.

The writer should also register the work with the Copyright Office. The copyright application is relatively simple to complete, and the fee is $20. By filing for a copyright, the writer gives public notice of the registration of the work, and he or she is presumed to be its owner or author. In addition, the registration of the work under the copyright law can entitle a writer to certain statutory damages and attorney's fees, should a dispute go to court.

Some writers place the WGA registration number and/or a copyright notice (© 1993 Jane Doe) on the script's title page. This clearly indicates that the writer has taken precautionary measures to protect his or her work.

If a writer decides to sue for copyright infringement under federal law, then he or she has to show two things: 1) that the accused party had access to the writer's work, and 2) that there is a substantial similarity between the accused party's work and that of the writer.

To establish access, writers should make a



practice of sending letters to anyone who receives a copy of the work and keeping copies of this correspondence. By establishing this paper trail, a writer can prove that a given party had access to the writer's work.

Proving that an accused party's work is "substantially similar" to a writer's work can be most difficult, time-consuming, and expensive. There is no small claims court for copyright infringement; a writer has to bring an action in federal court, often against individuals and companies with deep pockets. In addition, many commercial scripts in a given genre are quite similar, containing certain stock elements—such as the archetypical hero, the chase, and the prize in most action-adventure scripts. Then there's the matter of homage or influence. Take, for example, the story of a morally ambivalent man who teams up with an amoral femme fatale to kill the woman's husband for profit, until the couple is driven apart by doubts and betrayal. This describes the scripts for both Billy Wilder's *Double Indemnity* and Lawrence Kasdan's *Body Heat*. A court would most likely throw out a copyright infringement claim that is based merely on these generic elements, absent further elaboration of the storys' characters, plot elements, and themes.

Many writers with valid claims for copyright infringement have been able to negotiate settlements with certain reputable producers and studios. Development staff at the larger production companies and the studios generally argue that it would not be advantageous, either legally or economically, for their company to appropriate a writer's work, since this would damage the company's reputation in the creative community and impede the flow of potentially valuable projects from other writers to that producer or studio. They also contend that it is more cost effective to pay the writer for the rights to the work, so that no problems of authorship or ownership arise as a project proceeds from development to distribution.

Still there are disreputable producers who would appropriate a writer's work, thinking they could get away with it and assuming, often correctly, that the writer would not have the sufficient resources to deal with such a theft. Therefore, it is imperative that writers learn as much as possible about the parties to whom they submit their work—either through research or word of mouth from trusted sources.

Many writers can learn a lesson from the lawsuit that noted columnist Art Buchwald brought against Paramount Studios over *Coming to America*. Contrary to popular belief, the Buchwald case was not a copyright infringement case; it was a breach of contract claim. Buchwald had agreed to write and submitted a two-page outline for a story about an African prince who comes to America, loses his power, falls in love with an American, and returns with her to his kingdom to marry. Under the option agreement with Paramount Pictures, Buchwald was to be paid a flat fee for the outline, with the promise of additional fixed compensation if the studio produced a film that contained elements or parts of Buchwald's work. In addition, Buchwald would be entitled to a percentage of the net profits generated.

Paramount let the option on the Buchwald work lapse, and Buchwald tried to submit the

Ideas are not copyrightable; the expressions of ideas are.

outline to another studio. However, at the same time, Paramount was in the process of developing and producing a film called *Coming to America* about an African prince who comes to the United States, falls in love with an American, and takes her back to his kingdom to marry her.

In an action against Paramount, Buchwald's attorney decided that a stronger case could be argued on behalf of Buchwald based on a breach of option contract claim, since the standard of proving this is less than with a copyright infringement action. This breach of agreement claim would force the court to focus on the contract, rather than decide if the studio infringed upon Buchwald's copyright in his outline. Since Buchwald was able to establish that Paramount had access to his work and that they mentioned the Buchwald story to Murphy and worked with Murphy on a film that used several of the elements from Buchwald's outline, the writer prevailed.

Sending unsolicited scripts

Screenwriters should always bear in mind that whenever a producer, production company, or studio has agreed to look at your script, you have entered into a relationship. Proof of all such relationships should be documented by correspondence and agreements whenever possible. Even in the absence of documentation, a relationship between a producer and a writer may be implied; however, proving this often becomes an issue of pitting one party's credibility against the other's.

To limit the possibility of an inferred relationship, some producers refuse to accept unsolicited materials and send unopened scripts back to the writer. The producers reason that they are smarter not to accept such material in the first place.

Others agree to read unsolicited material provided that the writer agrees to sign a release. This generally absolves the producer of any liability if a similar work, or a work incorporating similar elements, should be developed or produced. Many writers object to such releases, thinking them a license to rip off the writer. The producers see them as a way of reading scripts by new writers without the threat of a lawsuit hanging over their heads. Some writers have brought infringement actions even after they have signed these releases, claiming they are one-sided contracts that should be deemed unconscionable. However, since such releases are an industry custom, the latter route is not always advisable.

So, how does the writer submit materials with-

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out having to sign a release? One way is to funnel work through an attorney or an agent. Producers are more likely to accept scripts this way, since they believe that the potential for legal trouble is less if the work has been vouched by an attorney or an agent. Writers also favor this option, believing it puts possibly disreputable producers on notice that they have a representative who is looking out for their best interests.

However, the catch-22 is that many agents will not accept unsolicited scripts or deal with writers who have not been referred to them by a trusted source. The only possible solution to this dilemma is to find out which agents (especially those who are WGA signatories) will accept work from new writers and try to pitch to them in a professional and appealing way. When doing this, try to establish a relationship. Make sure the agent sees not only the potential of a given script, but also the possibility that you can write in more than one kind of style or genre.

So what happens if a writer cannot find an agent or attorney to represent a script and doesn't have the contacts to get it "through the backdoor?" One signs a release. But before signing, the writer should get as much information as possible about the production company or studio. Check with periodicals, personal contacts, or referrals who know or have worked with the producers. Try to approach those with the best possible background and reputation. Sure, it is a risk, but it can be a calculated and informed one.

Some writers request that the producers sign an agreement of confidentiality and non-disclosure, so that any violation by the producer would be considered a breach of confidentiality. Many, if not most, producers will object to signing such an agreement and just pass on the submission, unless there is something special about it or its writer.

A brief word on treatments: not only are they less protectable than a fully-developed script, but most producers do not want to read them—unless the writer is someone like Joe Esterhaus (*Basic Instinct*, *Jagged Edge*) with a track record.

Adaptations and agreements

If a writer is working with a producer, both parties should understand who owns the right to the property. Did the producer approach the writer and engage him or her to develop a script from the concept or outline stage? Did the producer read the writer's script and agree to develop it with a view towards producing the work? Did the producer and the writer develop the property together? These facets of the producer-writer relationship should be discussed by both parties and stated in written form, even if it is simply a letter of agreement. The writer (as well as the producer) should have the agreement drafted by an attorney or, at the minimum, have an attorney review it. In the long run, an agreement produced in advance can lessen the tension over issues like compensation, credit, and rights ownership.

The same legal preventative advice applies to projects in which there is more than one writer. The rights and duties of the writers should be addressed and stated in a writing, preferably drafted and/or reviewed by an attorney.

The writer should attempt to place an arbitration provision in any written agreement. Binding arbitration is often in the writer's best interest, since it costs less than a trial and is a more expedient way to resolve a dispute—a consideration of particular importance when a project is in the middle of preproduction or production and time is of the essence. WGA writers and signatory producers are obligated to resolve key issues (such as credit) through mandatory, binding arbitration. By inserting such an arbitration clause in an agreement, the non-WGA writer can also make use of this method of dispute resolution.

If a writer is going to develop a script from an already existing property, such as a book, play, song, or poem, the writer *must acquire the underlying right* to adapt the work. One writer approached me with an adaptation of a recent James Bond book. While the script was quite good, I told him he was out of luck, since the Ian Fleming estate sold all motion picture rights for the Bond novels to veteran producer Albert Broccolli. If the producer or the estate did not like the script, it had no other place to go in the market. (Although he couldn't sell the script, the writer uses it as a writing sample.) Many writers believe that they can adapt a pre-existing work and, once the author or rights-holder reads the script, he or she will be bowled over. Unfortunately, that is rarely the case, and the endeavor often proves to be a loss of the writer's time and effort.

Scripts based on real people and true events are a legal landmine that can subject a writer to claims or actions for defamation and violations of a person's rights of privacy or publicity. A writer should find out whether certain rights must be acquired and how a script can be developed which can circumvent or, at least, minimize the potential for such claims.

In the end, there is no iron-clad way to ensure that one's work is protected. However, by taking these precautionary measures and developing an understanding of the legal and professional relationship between producer and writer, one can more effectively safeguard the fruits of one's labors.

Robert L. Seigel is an entertainment attorney in New York City and a principal in the Cinema Film Consulting firm.

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Jealousy, distrust, and self doubt are just a few of the emotions that underlie and undermine even the happiest of relationships. In his first feature, **Desolation Angels** (90 min., 16mm, color), writer/director Tim McCann explores the emotional fallout and violent aftermath of an acquaintance rape, and reveals the dark, comical obsessiveness of the male ego. The film is currently in postproduction. *Desolation Angels,* McCann and Company Films Inc., 796 Piermont Ave., Piermont NY 10968; (914) 365-3751.

Su Freidrich's **Rules of the Road** (31 min., 16mm/video) chronicles the break up of a lesbian love affair, and the fate of the beige station wagon with wood-paneled sides that the two lovers shared before the split. Once an atypical family love nest, the car becomes the property of one and the bane of the other's existence. Now, it seems there are faux-wood station wagons everywhere, each with its own family, its own dream of flying down the highway, its own story of unrealized fulfillment. *Rules of the Road*, Women Make Movies, 225 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10012; (212) 925-2052.



Su Friedrich's latest work, *Rules of the Road,* looks at the dissolution of a lesbian affair.

Courtesy Women Make Movies

American Social History Productions recently completed **Heaven Will Protect the Working Girl** (28 min., video), a documentary on the young Italian and Jewish immigrant women involved in the 1909 Shirtwaist Strike in New York. Through archival photographs, early motion picture footage, computer graphics, and animation, the video celebrates the role that popular culture and workplace struggle played in the lives of garment workers who strove to define themselves as "American" women. *Heaven Will Protect the Working Girl,* American Social History Film Library, 22D Hollywood Ave., Ho-Ho-Kus, NJ 07423; (201) 652-1989.

The East coast is the setting for another strike, this time by steel workers in Homestead, Pennsylvania, in 1892. The strikers are remembered through journalistic accounts, song, poetry, and reenactments in **The River Ran Red** (56 min; video). The film is directed by Steffi Domike and Nicole Fauteux, narrated by Blair Brown (of *The Days and Nights of Molly Dodd*), and scored by Molly Mason and Jay Ungar, whose "Ashoken Farewell" became the signature work of PBS's *The Civil War* series. *River Ran Red*, Nicole Fauteux, 5633 Woodmont St., Pittsburgh, PA 15217; (412) 521-0951.

The Hunt for Pancho Villa (50 min.,16mm) documents a story that began in 1916, when Francisco "Pancho" Villa and his forces attacked Columbus, New Mexico, and also follows the resulting expedition by General John J. "Blackjack" Pershing. *The Hunt For Pancho Villa*, Galan Productions Inc., 5524 Bee Cave Rd., Ste. B-5, Austin, TX 78746; (212) 529-3962.

In 1912, Iowa axe murders took the lives of all six members of the J.B. Moore family and two visiting children while they slept. The documentary feature **Villisca** (16mm), which will begin production in June 1994, will trace how this senseless act of violence affected and influenced a small rural town over decades. *Villisca*, Fourth Wall Productions, Box 341610, Los Angeles, CA 90034; (310) 837-5910.

Diamond Royals Productions, Inc. has begun work on the documentary **Conjure Women: Those Who Make Magic** (60 min., 16mm), which will profile will profile such African Americans as performance artist Robbie McCauley, filmmaker Leslie Harris, visual artist and philosophy professor Adrian Piper, and vocalist/composer Cassandra Wilson. The project was funded by the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Black Programming Consortium of PBS and was directed by Demetria Royals. *Conjure Women: Those Who Make Magic*, Diamond Royals Productions Inc., 285 Park Place, Brooklyn, NY 11238; (718) 622-6720.

Could an independent film actually lead to an arrest of one of America's deadliest murderers? Directors Ari Roussimoff and Tom Burnett, and producer Lawrence Samuel Shaw believe their feature, **Trail of Blood** (120 min., 35mm), may do just that. Based on the serial murders that claimed 60 to 100 lives in Washington State, California, and Massachusetts in the early eighties, this fact-based drama recounts, through the eyes of the killer, the events and investigation surrounding the case. The story recently moved beyond the boundaries of fact-based fiction into "real-life" intrigue when members of the production team started receiving anonymous phone calls, including death threats to the director. Stars New York performance artists Matthew Courtney, Taylor Mead, Madonna Chavez, and David Huberman. *Trail of Blood*, Roussimoff Films, 347 W. 55th St., Ste. 6H, New York, NY 10019; (212) 307-5256.

Created as an educational tool (complete with study guide and resource packet) for high school and college students, **Lines in the Sand** (12 min., video) dismantles the myths created in tandem by the media and the government during the Gulf War. The video makes a case for viewing the Gulf War as a kind of national therapy session in which the U.S.'s collective fears and disappointment over losing the war in Vietnam were exorcised in the Middle East. Videomakers Peter Wirth and Ed Griffin-Nolan encourage viewers to be critical of both government actions and the media. *Lines in the Sand*, Husayn Al-Kurdi, News International Press Service, 6161 El Cajon Blvd #4, San Diego, CA 92115; (619) 696-9531.

In **Kiss It Goodbye** (90 min., 35mm), a struggling musician living on Manhattan's Lower East Side becomes entangled in Chinatown's underworld when he witnesses a brutal murder. Actor/director Gregory Smith, 26, makes his feature film debut and Bill Baldwin produces. *Kiss it*

Goodbye, My Ball Productions, 204 West 108th St. #23, New York, NY 10025; (212) 749-5668.

John Trudell, an activist and poet, has been a significant figure in both the history of the Native American civil rights movement and in the world of music and the spoken word—working with the likes of Bob Dylan and Jackson Browne. Now, director Heather Rae has captured Trudell's profundity through archive footage and abstract imagery in **Trudell** (90 min.,16mm). *Trudell*, Heather Rae, Wild Horse Productions, 4210 Irving Place, Los Angeles, CA 90232; (310) 202-7360.

One person's trash is another's prize. So say the suburban scavengers, bargain hunters, trash collectors, and junk junkies featured in Diane Stredicke's documentary **The Great American Garage Sale** (27 min., 16mm). By capturing the addiction to this trash-and-treasure phenomenon, Stredicke reveals the humor, kitsch, and entrepreneurial spirit behind the strictly American pastime. *The Great American Garage Sale*, Diane Stredicke, 441 Humboldt St. #3R, Brooklyn, NY 11211; (718) 383-7798.

Robert, Wendy, and Michael have had a rough week in the big city and decide to escape by hiking in the mountains. But nature talks back. The experimental narrative **Above 10,000 and Below 30** (75 min., 16mm, color) recently completed production. *Above 10,000 and Below 30*, Damaged Californians, 5632 Van Nuys Blvd. #350, Van Nuys, CA 91401; (213) 254-1156.

The horses will not ever run again at the one mile oval in Reton, Washington. Yet the 50-year history of thoroughbred racing at Longacres race track will be captured in Stephen Sadis' documentary **The Miracle Strip** (80 min.,16mm). *The Miracle Strip*, Perpetual Motion Pictures, 1601 2nd Ave., Ste. 900, Seattle, WA 98101; (206) 448-7568.

Everyday Miracles (60 min., video) chronicles the tenacity that three mentally retarded adults have acquired at work, home, and through their friendships with one another. Bill Harden and Fran Victor of Victor/Harden Productions returned recently from abroad where they shot the threesome on a pilgrimage to Israel. *Everyday Miracles*, Victor/Harder Productions, Inc., Box 250231, West Bloomfield, MI 48325; (313) 661-6730.

The Pope of Utah (98 min., 16mm), a first feature for recent Temple University film school grads Chiam Bianco and Steve Saylor, draws parallels between TV evangelism and bad vaudeville. The film focuses on a trinity of modern-day preoccupations: media, capitalism, and religion. Del, an aging vaudeville comic, who works as staff censor at a local TV station, is continually abused by his sadistic bosses and his wife. At the same time, his co-worker, a marketing-savvy telepreacher, has more than his share of fame and success. In an envious rage, Del develops a high-tech blackmail scheme to cut him off at the pass. *The Pope of Utah*, Bianco-Saylor, 2100 Walnut St., 5th fl., Philadelphia, PA 19103; (215) 568-0139.

From Baton Rouge, Louisiana comes **Uncool Orbit**, the story of an amateur photographer who is mentally assaulted by aliens. They replace his world with a bland, unthreatening landscape he does not recognize. Upon creating a shielding device, our hero fights back, and with surprising results. The project was funded by a 1992 Equipment Access Grant from the New Orleans Video Access Center. *Uncool Orbit*, Jeff Walker/Janet Wondra, 668 N. 6th St., Baton Rouge, LA 70802; (504) 343-3105.

ATTENTION AIVF MEMBERS

The In &Out of Production column is designed to give AIVF members an opportunity to keep the organization and others interested in independent media informed about current work. We profile works-in-progress as well as recent releases. These are not critical reviews but informational descriptions. AIVF members are invited to submit detailed information about their latest film or video. Send descriptions and black and white photos to: In & Out of Production, *The Independent*, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., New York, NY 10012.

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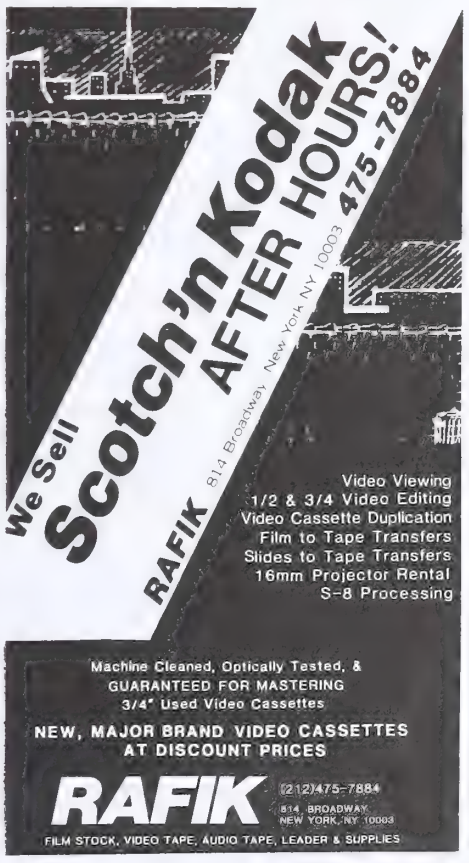
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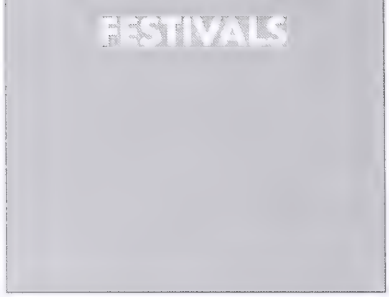
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This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser, director of the FIVF Festival Bureau. Listings do not constitute an endorsement. Since some details change faster than we do, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. In order to improve our reliability and make this column more beneficial to independents, we encourage all film- and videomakers to contact FIVF Festival Bureau with their personal festival experiences, positive and negative.

Domestic

ASPEN SHORTSFEST, Feb. 24-27, CO. Originally part of Aspen FilmFest, estab. in 1992 as separate 4-day event; fest receives over 200 entries from around country. Awards incl. Best of Fest, First Prize, Jury Awards & Special Recognition Award. Running times must be under 30 min. & competition entrants must live & work in the US; int'l shorts accepted out of competition. Over $5,000 in awards, incl. $2,500 Best of Festival Award. Fest one of qualifying contests in US for Academy Award nomination. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Entry fee: $25. Deadline: Dec. 10. Contact: Ellen Kohner, fest director, Aspen ShortsFest, PO Box 8910, 601 E. Bleeker, Aspen, CO 81612; (303) 925-6882; fax: 9534.

ATLANTA FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, June 8-19, GA. Now in 18th yr., competitive fest is presented by media arts center IMAGE & is dedicated to innovative & entertaining prods. About 60 films shown at IMAGE, the High Museum of Art & other theatres. $8,000 in cash & equipment prizes awarded to entries in dramatic, experimental, animated, doc, student & other cats; film & video awarded separately. Small honorarium given for exhibited work. Fest has enthusiastic local audience & extensive local press coverage. Entries must have been completed since Jan. 1991; sponsored works (industrials, commercials, work done for corporate clients) ineligible. Fest, in conjunction w/ Goethe Institute, plans to bring in Rosa Von Praunheim for retro. Entry fee: $30 individual/$25 IMAGE members; $40 distributors/for profit; SASE or return postage required. Formats: 35mm (preview on cassette only, will be shown at venues other than IMAGE), 16mm, S-8, 3/4", 1/2". Deadline: Dec. 17. Contact: Claire Reynolds, Atlanta Film & Video Festival, IMAGE Film/Video Center, 75 Bennett St., Ste. J2, Atlanta, GA 30309; (404) 352-4254 (fest hotline)/352-4225; fax: 0653.

BACA/BROOKLYN ARTS COUNCIL FILM & VIDEO FESTIVAL, March, NY. Short (under 60 min.) ind. films & videos accepted for this fest, now in 28th yr. Industrial & instructional films not eligible. Selected films receive special award certificates. Selection jury consists of members of National Academy of Television Arts & Sciences & filmmakers, critics, distributors & curators. Highest scoring films & videos screened publicly at various NYC locations, incl. Metropolitan Museum of Art, Jefferson Market Library, BACA Downtown, Millenium, Anthology Film Archives; other sites to be determined. Entry fee: $40. Formats: 16mm, 3/4"; preview on cassette. Deadline: Dec. 20. Contact: Rob Orlinick, fest coordinator/Mark Dannat, asst. program coordinator, BACA/Brooklyn Arts Council Film & Video Festival, 195 Cadman Plaza West, Brooklyn, NY 11021; (718) 625-0080; fax: 3294.

BIG MUDDY FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 27-Mar. 6, IL. 16-yr.-old fest accepts all entries of ind. film & video makers in cats of experimental, doc & narrative. Entries should be completed in previous 3 yrs. Entry fees: $20-$30, depending on length. Deadline: Feb. 7. Contact: Habib Faisal, Big Muddy Film Festival, Dept. of Cinema & Photography, Southern Illinois University at Carbondale, Carbondale, IL 62901; (618) 453-1482.

CITY LORE FESTIVAL OF FILM & VIDEO, Spring, NY. 8th annual noncompetitive fest of American folk cultural documentaries seeks nonfiction works "present alternate visions of everyday life in the US—expressions of community, tradition & identity." This yr.'s program, "Streetlife," will explore expressive culture generated by & about urban experience. Program segments will incl. Street Performance & Festivals, Urban Play, Street Politics, the Built Environment & Working Streets. Fest may also present new docs that relate to other folk cultural themes. Entry fee: $15 or return postage & packaging. Formats: 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Jan. 1. Contact: Eric John, director, City Lore Festival of Film & Video, 72 E. 1st St., NY, NY 10003; (212) 529-1955; fax: 5062.

CLEVELAND INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, April, OH. Over 50 features & 80 shorts from 25 countries screened for audiences of about 18,000. Cash prizes for shorts total $1,500. Premiere audience estimated at 21,000. Program incl. competitive ind. film series of shorter works by young & student filmmakers. Entry fee: $25/short (under 45 min.) & $50/feature (45 min. & over). Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Dec. 31. Contact: David Wittkowsky, Cleveland Int'l Film Festival, 6200 SOM Center Rd., #C20, Cleveland, OH 44139; (216) 349-0270; fax: 0210.

HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH FILM FESTIVAL, Spring, NY. Project of Human Rights Watch, leading US-based int'l human rights monitoring organization. 4th edition of fest, only nationally recognized fest to focus on human rights, will take place in NYC & LA, presenting 30 fiction, doc, experimental & animated films & videos, incl. works-in-progress. Submitted works should address human rights issues such as political prisoners, abuses of people, freedom of expression, oppressed minorities & indigenous populations, racial/gender discrimination, refugees/immigration policy. Work may be any length, selection focuses on artistic merit & sophistication w/ which issues are confronted. Since its inception, fest has featured over 150 works. Each yr. selected works travel to cities, incl. Easthampton, Boston, Berkeley, Seattle, LA, Houston, Portland & Minneapolis & last yr works were shown in Vienna at World Conference on Human Rights & at Venice International Film Festival. Mini version aired on Super Channel, broadcast across Europe. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 1/2". Deadline: Dec. 31. Contact: Bruni Burres, fest programmer, Human Rights Watch Film Festival, 485 Fifth Ave., 3rd fl., NY, NY 10017; (212) 972-8400; fax: 0905.

LA FREEWAVES VIDEO FESTIVAL, February 3-6, 1994, CA. Fest seeks ind. videos of experimental, narrative, doc, art & animation for 5 shows at AFI National Video Festival, 1 spectacle at a drive-in & 4 regional cablecasts. Joint open call for AFI Video Festival. $25 entry fee. 3/4" format. Deadline: Nov. 15. AFI National Video Festival, 2021 North Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027. For entry form, call AFI (213) 856-7707.

MIAMI INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Feb. 4-13, FL. Noncompetitive fest w/ annual theme of "For The Love of Film," considers features, docs, shorts, experimental & animated works. Fest started in 1984. Program also features retros, seminars & tributes. Audiences estimated at 50,000. Entries should be Florida premieres & preferably national premieres. No entry fee. Format: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Nov. 30; make written request for appl. Contact: Nat Chediak, fest director, Miami International Film Festival, Rivergate Plaza Bldg., 444 Brickell Ave., Ste. 229, Miami, FL 33131; (305) 377-3456; fax: (305) 577-9768.

NEW DIRECTORS/NEW FILMS, March, NY. Prestigious fest, estab. in 1972, surveys world cinema to capacity audiences at Museum of Modern Art. Dedicated to discovery of new & unrecognized narrative features, docs & shorts. 20-25 programs shown; no specific cats. Shorts programmed w/ features. Entries must be NY premieres. Cosponsored by MoMA's Dept. of Film & Film Society of Lincoln Center, which presents NY Film Fest. No entry fee; entrants pay shipping. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Jan. 5. Contact: New Directors/New Films, Film Society of Lincoln Center, 70 Lincoln Center Plaza, NY, NY 10023-6595; (212) 875-5610; fax: 5636.

SANTA BARBARA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 4-13, CA. Fest accepts features, docs, shorts, student works. Awards: Best Director Jury Award, Dame Judith Anderson Award for Best Feature Film, Bruce C. Corwin Award for Artistic Excellence, "Best of the Fest" Peoples Choice Award. Entry fee: $30. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 1/2". Deadline: Dec. 15. Contact: Diane Durst, Santa Barbara International Film Festival, 1216 State St., Ste. 710, Santa Barbara, CA 93101; (805) 963-0023; fax: (805) 962-2524.

UNITED STATES SUPER 8MM FILM/VIDEO FESTIVAL, Feb. 11, NJ. 6th annual fest held at Rutgers Univ., encourages any genre (animation, doc, experimental, fiction, personal, etc.) but work must have originated on S-8 film or 8mm video. All works screened by panel which awards $1,000 in cash & prizes. Last yr. 13 prize-winning works selected from 130 entries. Touring program culled from finalists of past 3 yrs makes rounds at variety of media arts centers, fests & universities. Entry fee: $25. Deadline: Jan. 21. Contact: United States S-8 Film/Video Festival, Rutgers Film Co-op, Program in Cinema Studies, Rutgers Univ., 43 Mine St., New Brunswick, NJ 08903; (908) 932-8482.

Foreign

BERLIN BLACK INTERNATIONAL CINEMA FESTIVAL, May, Germany. Produced by Fountainhead Tanz Theatre, fest screens cinema that focuses on films exploring racism, sexism & homophobia to give better understanding of issues of power & oppression. Award

of $1,000 to film that best expresses issues. Fest will take place in Berlin, NY & Chicago. Formats: 1/2", 16mm, 3/4". Deadline: Dec. 31. Contact: Andrew Salgado, prod. manager, Black Int'l Cinema, c/o Maverick Theatre & Film Co., 73-11 Utopia Parkway, Fresh Meadows, NY 11366; (718) 591-1646. In Germany: Angela Kramer, program coordinator, Fountainhead & Black International Cinema, Hohenfriedbergstrasse 14, 1000 Berlin 62, Germany; tel: 49 30 782 1621.

HONG KONG INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, March 25-April 9, Hong Kong. Now in 18th yr., fest shows 170 features, shorts, videos & some animated works from over 30 countries. Int'l section made up of 70 entries from 20 countries. No entry fee. Formats: 35mm, 16mm. Deadline: Dec. 1. Contact: Hong Kong Int'l Film Festival, Level 7, Administration Bldg., Hong Kong Cultural Centre, 10 Salisbury Rd., Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong; tel: (852) 734-2900; fax: (852) 366-5206.

SINGAPORE INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, April, Singapore. FIAPF-recognized invitational fest for features, shorts, docs & animation; has noncompetitive section & competitive section for Asian cinema w/ award for best Asian feature. Fest accepts features completed after Jan. 93. Entries must be Singapore premieres. Audiences about 40,000. Main section shows 35mm & may show 16mm; all formats shown in fringe programs. Fest also has Children's/Young Adult section. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, 3/4". Contact: Philip Cheah, director, Singapore International Film Festival, 168 Kim Seng Rd., Singapore 0923; tel: 65 738 7567; fax: 65 738 7578.

TAM TAM VIDEO INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION FOR TELEVISION PROGRAMMES, June, Italy. Organized by CIES (Centre for Development Information & Education) & held in San Giuliano Terme (Pisa) & Rome, competition focuses on TV & video prods made in South of world or focusing on its social reality; special attention to cats of doc on Southern areas, docudrama, fiction, video art, music clips & animation. Awards total $15,000. Some videomakers invited to attend. Entries open to TV broadcasting companies, ind. producers & NGOs. Entries must be no longer than 60 min. & produced after Jan. 1, 1992; entries shot in film admitted to competition if presented in video standards. No entry fee. Formats: 3/4", Betacam SP; preview on 3/4" or 1/2". Contact: Tam Tam Video, Giornalismo Televisivo e Terzo Mondo, Via Palermo, 36, 00184 Roma, Italy, tel: 39 6 4746246; fax: 39 6 486419.

TAMPERE INTERNATIONAL SHORT FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 9-13, Finland. Now in 24th yr as major stop on int'l short film fest circuit, competitive fest annually shows over 300 animated, doc & fiction films from nearly 40 countries to audiences of 20,000. Competition incl. about 100 int'l entries. Children's films accepted in any cat. Awards: Grand Prix (bronze statuette Kiss & FIM 25,000 (US $4,500) for best film); best film in each cat (statuette & FIM $4,000[US $700]); diplomas of merit; cash prizes. Competition entries must be under 35 min. (or less) & have had 1st public screening on or after Jan. 1, 1993.This yr. special programs will feature African short films of the 1980s, complete retro of Jan Svankmajer's works, retro of Polish filmmaker Walerian Borowczyk, retro celebrating 80th anniversary of Finnish animated film. Formats: 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Jan. 15. Contact: Tampere International Short Film Festival 305, 33101 Tampere, Finland; tel: 358 31 213 0034/223 5681; fax: 358 31 223 0121.





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EXPERIENCED FREELANCE ONLINE EDITOR needed. Must have knowledge of GVG switcher, Callaway/CMX editor, Abekas A5I, Abekas A72, Beta SP & D-2. Ask for Haron or Caleb. Videogenix (212) 925-0445.

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Call for Papers

JOURNAL OF FILM AND VIDEO seeks manuscripts on: Rethinking Genres; Race & Ethnicity; Film/Video Production; Regional Cinema; The Law; The New Auteurism & essays on topics related to film/video. Send 3 copies of essay (double-spaced, anonymous, MLA style) to: Frank P. Tomasulo, Editor, *Journal of Film and Video*, Dept. of Communication, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA 30303.

Conferences ▪ Seminars

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE'S Advanced Technology Programs is hosting a workshop and conference on Digital Independence in Los Angeles from December 10-14. A series of panels and overview sessions will lead up to a "one-man multimedia storytelling performance." For further information, contact AFI Advanced Technology Programs, (213) 856-7641.

HARVESTWORKS in Manhattan offers classes in subjects ranging from Audio/Video Synchronization to Introduction to Multimedia Production & Audio Preproduction. All classes (1-2 days) are held at 596 Broadway, NY, NY. To register, call John McGeehan at (212) 431-1130.

WOMEN IN LIMBO presents a series of issue-oriented autobiographical programs wherein women artists use slides & other media to describe their lives. Audience invited to participate in discussions following the presentations. Programs are Sundays, 6pm-8pm in the Knot Room, Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St. Admission is $3. For more info, call Melissa Burch at (212) 219-8551.

WORLD CONGRESS ON BIOMEDICAL COMMUNICATIONS, the first meeting to bring together professionals involved in medical & scientific photography, illustration, motion media, print & computer imaging, will be held in Orlando, FL June 18-23, 1994. For more info, contact: World Congress Meeting Professional Conferences, 25 Mauchly, Ste. 305, Irvine, CA 92718; (714) 753-8680.

Films ▪ Tapes Wanted

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: have you produced a film, video, or videodisc on the visual arts? Send information on your prod. to the Program for Art on Film Database, a computer index to over 19,000 prods on the visual arts. We are interested in prods on all visual arts topics & would welcome information on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film Database, Program for Art on Film, 980 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10021; fax: (212) 628-8963.

BAD TWIN, NY-based prod./exhibition collective, seeks films under 30 min. for ongoing programs in Europe & US. Alternative approaches to all genres & forms welcome. Must have finished 16mm prints avail. Submit VHS only for preview; incl. SASE for return. Contact: Bad Twin, Box 528, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276.

CAROUSEL, series for municipal cable channels 23 & 49 in Chicago, seeks films/videos for children 12 yrs & under, any length, any genre. Send w/ appropriate releases, list of credits & personal info to: Carousel, c/o Screen Magazine, 720 N. Wabash, Chicago, IL 60611. Tapes will be returned if accompanied by postage.

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length. Deadlines for Notices will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., November 8 for the Jan./Feb. issue). Send to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, NY, NY 10012.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video art interstitials to play btwn alternative music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTER FOR NEW TV (CNTV) seeks 3/4", VHS or Hi8 work for cable access show. Contact: CNTV, 1440 N. Dayton St., Chicago, IL 60622.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Contact: Cine Accion, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info., contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" Beta & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Tanya Steele, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

DUTV-CABLE 54, a nonprofit educational access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, is looking for works by ind. producers for broadcast. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, SVHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

THE E-TEAM, children's TV show w/ environmental theme, seeks film or video footage & completed works that maintain an environmental, nature, or science theme. Fees paid for footage used on air. Contact: David Calderwood, producer, Euro-Pacific Productions, Inc., (908) 530-4451.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Please contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Ronhert Park, CA 94928.

FAMILY, INC. Investigations, explorations, & personal expression of world's oldest institution needed for film & video exhibition at Artists' TV Access. Work by artists 18 & younger particularly encouraged & work that reinvents genres (experimental docs, media deconstructions, etc.) Deadline: Dec. 15. Send entries in VHS preview format, w/ SASE (video mailer) to: Family, Inc., c/o Artists' Televison Access, 992 Valencia St., San Francisco, CA 94110.

FEM TV (Feminist TV), an award-winning cable access show in Houston, seeks short videos by/about/for women (3/4" preferred). Videos credited. Tapes returned. Please mail to: Fem TV, PO Box 66604 Houston, TX 77266-6604.

FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, highly aggressive co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seeks new members w/ finished feature-length screenplays for our reading workshop &/or short films for our screening series (16mm, 15 min. or less). For submission guidelines, call (212) 875-7537 & leave name & address, or write to Film Babies Collective, PO Box 2100, NY, NY 10025.

FULL HOUSE, a nite of movies. Monthly fest of short films to screen in universities & cafes from East Village to Burlington, Vermont (stops incl. Brooklyn, Albany & Saratoga). Films must be 16mm w/ optical sound. Preview of 16mm or VHS. Send $10 w/ entry & SASE to: Jack of Hearts Productions, Attn: Michael Ellenbogen, 42 N. Allen St., Albany, NY 12203; (518) 489-2037. Submitted films will also be considered for the first annual Full House Extravaganza in NYC April 1994.

LA PLAZA, a weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about the Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film- & video makers that deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. strongly encouraged. Please send tapes in Beta, 3/4" or VHS format to: La Plaza/Aquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

LOOKING FOR 30 min. docs or dramas about teen or child who leaves home due to problems w/ family or society. Should show kids & parents need each other & are willing to fight to stay together. Target group: 8-12 yrs & parents. Will be American entry for int'l series of 8 programs to focus on UN's Int'l Year of the Family, 1994. Send written description of film (1-pg.) to Andrea Traubner, Thirteen/WNET, 356 W. 58th St., NY, NY 10019.

LOS ANGELES CONTEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS (LACE) seeks recently completed video art, experimental docs & other innovative video works for ongoing screening program. Send 3/4" or 1/2" tape, description, resumé & SASE to: Tom Dennison, performance & video coordinator, LACE, 1804 Industrial St., Los Angeles, CA 90021; (213) 624-5650.

NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across the US. We are looking for political, entertainment, & PSAs in super VHS or VHS. Send to NyTex Productions, PO Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn: Don Cevaro.

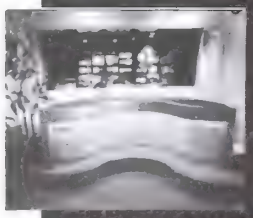
ORGONE CINEMA, newly formed group, looking for films/videos for possible exhibition in Pittsburgh area. Prefer VHS for preview. Especially interested in Regular 8, S-8, & 16mm. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, c/o M. Johnson, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PACIFIC ARTS seeks selected domestic & foreign ind. projects—narrative, animation, doc, experimental &

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performance—to air on wkly cable access show. Any theme, any length. Projects credited. Submit 3/4" tapes w/ SASE to: Pacific Arts, PO Box 533, Farmington, MI 48332-0533.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit an irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Dana Saunders, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central Television, 20178 Rockport Way, Malibu, CA 90265.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests non-commercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, PO Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

REEL TIME, monthly film series at Performance Space 122 in Manhattan, seeks short (under 45 min.) ind. films/videos. Submit VHS preview copy to: Caroline Koebel, c/o Reel Time, PS 122, 150 1st Ave, NY, NY 10009; 212/477-5829 (x327).

SOUTHERN CIRCUIT 1994-95, tour of 6 artists who each travel 10 days to 8 southern sites & present 1 show/city, seeks film/video artists. No appl. form. Interested artists should submit VHS, 3/4" or 16mm film program approx. 1-hr. long (can be cued for 30 min. section for judging purposes) w/ resumé & publicity. Following prescreening process, artists selected from 40 finalists by panel in April '94. Demands of tour & variety of venues make performance art generally inappropriate. Deadline: January 17, 1994. Send materials to: South Carolina Arts Commission, Media Arts Center, 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201, Attn: Felicia Smith or Susan Leonard, South Carolina Arts Commission; (803) 734-8696.

STONEPINE PRODUCTIONS seeks submissions of quality, full-length scripts. All genres considered. Contact: 10 Universal City Plaza, Ste 1077A, Universal City, CA 91608-1097; (818) 505-3500.

TV 2000. TV pilot seeks new videos that convey positive images for teens. All genres (art, music & film on video). Send letter of permission to air materials & video to: Daryl Grant, Box 627, Ansonia Station, NY, NY 10023.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, seen by 9 million people on 42 broadcast & cablecast stations nationwide last yr., seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, animation, performance films/videos & media art under 28 min. for insightful series. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs preferred. For more info contact: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

VIRTUAL FOCUS seeks submissions of doc, narrative & art videos for monthly public screenings. Send VHS copies to: Virtual Focus, 6019 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 133, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 250-8118.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for wkly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

Opportunities ▪ Gigs

APPALSHOP, media arts collective in Whitesburg, KY, seeks fundraising director to create/implement fundraising plan for individual contributors & major donors. Position requires strong speaking, writing & organizational skills & willingness to work in cooperatively run organization. Candidates should be committed to working for change through cultural expression. Job requires travel & ability to represent organization in variety of settings. Knowledge of Appalachian region helpful as is experience w/ nonprofits. Send resumé & letter of interest to: Tim Marema, Appalshop, 306 Madison St., Whitesburg, KY 41858.

INSIGNIA FILMS has openings for p/t interns on 2 projects. First is 7-part, 10-hr. series (16mm) on history of American West for PBS, scheduled to air in 1996; executive produced by Ken Burns, directed by Stephen Ives. Second is 90-min. PBS special on national tour of Cornerstone Theater Co.'s prod. of *The Winter's Tale*. Project in postprod. Interns needed to transfer footage on 3/4" editing system, using MAC computer controller. Pays $10/day. Contact Sarah at (212) 274-0096.

MEDIA NETWORK, nationally recognized media arts center committed to development & use of alternative media for social change, is recruiting trainees for highly successful Seeing Though AIDS media literacy project that teaches health care workers how to use media in their AIDS education & counseling work. Trainees will work w/ cofacilitators to conduct outreach to health facilities, identify appropriate media, prepare & participate in workshop facilitation. Contact: Ilana Navaro (212) 929-2663.

NEW YORK SETTLEMENT HOUSE seeks enterprising videomaker to produce a video on changing ethnic patterns of its neighborhood. Limited funds avail., artistic freedom. Please call Jeanette Pertz at (212) 718-6739.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for *Dyke TV*, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

Publications

BAY AREA BACKLOT, a new floppy disk directory covering Northern California's motion picture, video, desktop video & multimedia industry has been released by *Film/Tape World*, Northern California's film & video news magazine. It will be avail. on floppy disk for easy access from any Macintosh computer. For more info, call *Film/Tape World* at (415) 543-6189.

CALIFORNIA NEWSREEL has published 32-pg. resource guide designed to help teachers use 7 African feature films recently released by California Newsreel in wide variety of college courses. Containing brief introductory essays on each film, teaching selections & select bibliographies, the expanded catalog enables colleges & public libraries to build in-depth video collections of African Cinema. For free copy & more info, contact: California Newsreel, 149 Ninth St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 621-6196

Resources ▪ Funds

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE administers for the National Endowment for the Arts a program of grants for ind. media artists whose work shows exceptional

promise & who have demonstrated a commitment to the art of the moving image. Highly competitive; limited grants. Previous recipients may not reapply. Grants range from $10,000 to $20,000. Appls. judged on basis of creativity of proposed project & artistic merit & technical quality of sample work. For info & deadline, contact: American Film Institute, PO Box 27999, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (213) 856-7600.

CHANGE, INC. assists artists of all disciplines w/ emergency aid to avoid eviction or cover medical expenses, unpaid utility bills, fire damage or other emergencies. Grants range from $100 to $500. Send letter describing financial emergency, copies of bills or eviction notice, resumé, announcements of exhibitions, work sample & at least 2 letters of recommendation from field. For info, write: Change, Inc., PO Box 705, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276; (212) 473-3742.

CREATIVE SCREENWRITERS GROUP, national organization dedicated to advancement of writing, is launching free service for everyone interested in improving writing skills. CSG will provide assistance to anyone interested in joining writers' group in his/her community. CSG also provides info on how to form new groups. Send name, address & phone w/ description of writing interests & SASE to: Creative Screenwriters Group, 518 Ninth St., NE, Ste. 308, Washington, DC 20002.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES (NEH) offers study grants for humanities teachers w/ heavy teaching loads & limited opportunities for professional development. The $3,000 grants provide 6 wks of support during the summer 1994 undertake F/T humanities study. For appl. or guidelines, contact: NEH Study Grants, Rm 316, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8463.

THE PAUL ROBESON FUND FOR INDEPENDENT MEDIA, a project of the Funding Exchange, is requesting proposals from ind. film, video & radio producers for the Fund's 1993/1994 funding cycle. The fund is open to all producers of social issue media. Film & video proposals may be doc, narrative, experimental, or animation. Radio projects may be a pilot, special, limited series or series of modules. Deadline: Dec. 1. Appls. & guidelines may be obtained by calling or writing the Funding Exchange, 666 Broadway, #500, NY, NY 10012; (212) 529-5300.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr, $1,000-$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

$60,000 SCREENPLAY COMPETITION. Conquest Media is seeking producable film scripts from 60 to 130 pgs. Competition awards up to 3 $20,000 grants for scripts chosen. Deadline: Feb. 1, 1994. For rules & info, send SASE to Conquest Media Screenplay Competition, Box 694, Huntsville, AL 35804.

UCROSS FOUNDATION offers artists 2- to 8-wk. residencies at foot of Big Horn Mts in Wyoming. Appls welcome from artists in all disciplines (visual, literary, film/video, music, scholarly). Deadline: March 1 for August-December session. Room, board & studio space provided free of charge. For appl, contact: Executive director, Ucross Foundation, 2836 US Hwy 1416 East, Clearmont, Wyoming 82835; (307) 737-2291.

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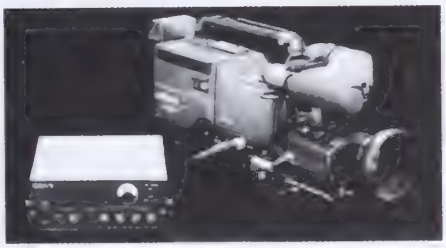
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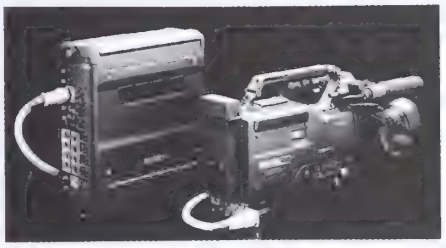
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For Information /Entry Forms Contact: Al Nigrin, Director, 1993 U.S. Super 8mm Film/Video Festival, Rutgers Film Co-op, Rutgers University, 43 Mine Street, New Brunswick, New Jersey 08903 (908) 932-8482; (908) 932-1935 FAX

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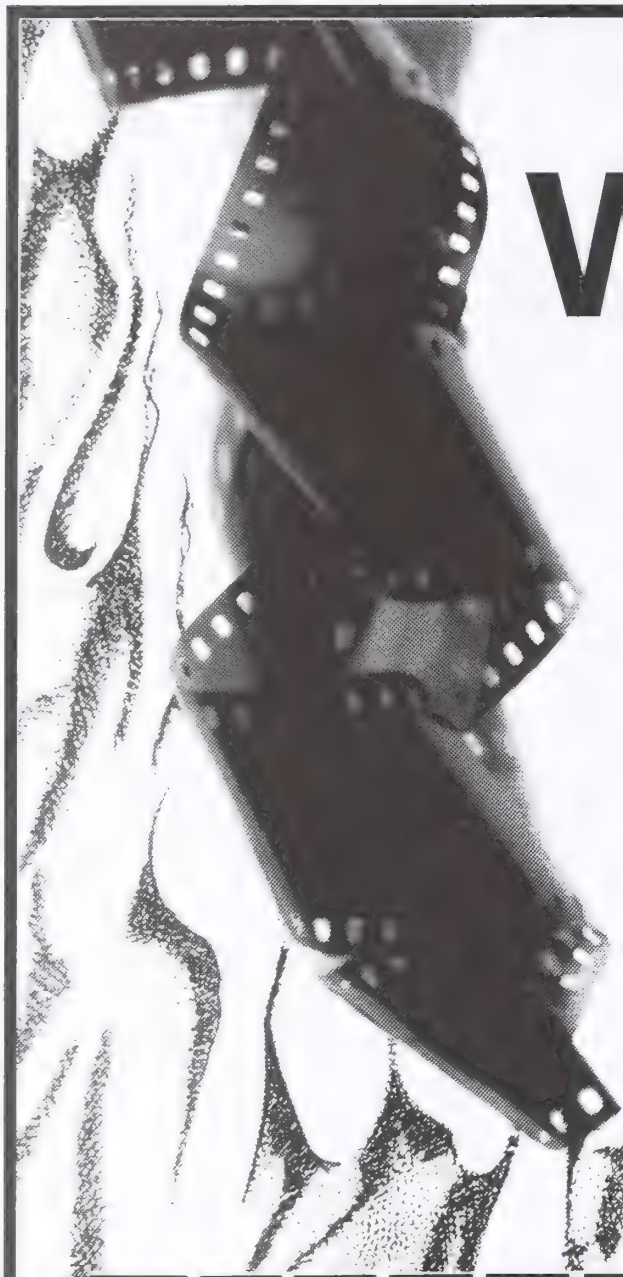


Q&A with Monty Ross

Spike Lee's Producer Takes the Director's Chair

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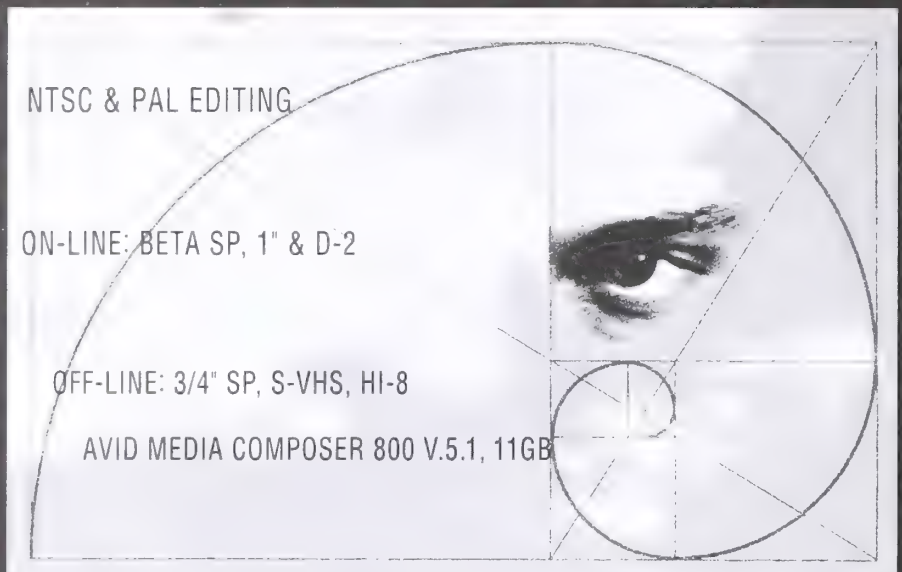
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10



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COVER: Suzy Amis and Fred Ward star in Beth B.'s recently completed dramatic feature, *Two Small Bodies*. In this issue, critic Bérénice Reynaud explores the implications of foreign financing through the examples of Beth B. and Sara Driver, who looked to German and other foreign sources to fund their work. Also in this issue, Monty Ross talks about his work with Spike Lee, his move to directing, and the state of black filmmaking. Photo courtesy Beth B.

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GROWING PAINS

Third World Newsreel Endures a Bumpy Transition

A chain of events at New York-based Third World Newsreel has, in recent months, served as grist for the media community's rumor mill: First, the 25-year-old film distribution and production company, maintained by and for people of color, had to address long-term organizational problems while preparing an Advancement Grant proposal for the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA). The internal problems were made public by former employees who either had left their posts voluntarily or had been dismissed. But employees are not the only ones to have publicized their gripes about the organization. A dispute with Black Audio Film Collective, which landed a representative from the London-based production company in jail, has people on both sides of the Atlantic talking.



***Race Against Prime Time*, David Shulman's documentary on the media's coverage of the 1980 race riots in Liberty City, Florida, is just one of the many videos and films distributed by Third World Newsreel during its 25-year history.**

Photo UPI/Bettmann Newsphotos, courtesy videomaker

Third World Newsreel was founded (as Camera News) in 1968 "to document national and community events that were ignored or distorted by the mass media," states an organizational pamphlet. From its inception, the organization has provided production, distribution, and exhibition services, and has offered a film/video production workshop since the late 1970s. Ada Gay Griffin, executive director of the organization, began working for Newsreel in 1984. She has held her current position since 1988.

Third World's problems, which have ranged from a lack of employee benefits to the borrowing of organizational funds by Griffin and Newsreel's corporate secretary, J.T. Takagi, would have remained in-house were it not for a recent staff shakeup. Three employees, virtually Newreel's entire staff, have left the organization in the past five months: distribution director Lorna Johnson, who had worked at Newsreel for three years, resigned in June; marketing director Reginald Woolery was dismissed in August after two years; and office manager Kym Ragusa resigned in October, just one year after she started.

Johnson and Woolery, who are starting a promotion and marketing company called Third Eye Media Group, drafted a letter to the National Endowment for the Arts' advisory council in August 1993, which they forwarded to over 40 funders, press reps, and members of the media community. The letter contends that Newsreel both exploited employees and alienated clients and filmmakers. Griffin responds that the organization has been working on precisely these issues in the course of the grueling self-assessment process for the NEA Advancement Grant, a process in which Woolery and Johnson participated.

During numerous phone interviews with *The Independent*, Griffin addressed several of the accusations made in the letter: Regarding employment practices, Johnson and Woolery charged that all employees at Newsreel, including executives, have been retained as outside professional contractors, lacking both contracts and conventional employee benefits. Griffin says it was only in the process of the self-assessment that the organization realized this practice was unacceptable. "The administrative policies were inherited problems, an old style of working that it was clear needed to be updated and professionalized, but the specifics of what and how to change were not clearly identified until the assessment process."

A second charge leveled by the former employees is that the organization's directors took advantage of in-house production policies by "diverting" organizational funds to pursue their own film projects.

According to Griffin, she has "on rare occasions" borrowed money from the organization, but only after outside funding for her film projects had been guaranteed. For example, a film she is producing on Audre Lorde received an ITVS grant through Newsreel's fiscal sponsorship, and, as Griffin explains it, while negotiating the contract with ITVS, she had to intensify production of the film because Lorde's health was deteriorating. "The production was $40-$50,000 in debt to the organization, prior to getting its first ITVS funding," Griffin says. "The money was then returned."

Finally, Johnson and Woolery's letter states that Third World's directors neglected the day-to-day functioning of the organization during the times they were in production; meanwhile staff members did not have the authority to make decisions. As a result, no distribution catalogue has been published for five years, and filmmakers and clients are not dealt with promptly. Lillian Jimenez, who acted as consultant for the organization throughout the NEA advancement process,

assessed that Newsreel was not hierarchical per se but that "it was a Mom and Pop operation. Information was centralized in key people, there was no organizational memory, and there was insufficient internal communication," Jimenez says.

What happened recently when the London-based Black Audio Film Collective, whose films were distributed by Third World, attempted to contact Griffin regarding a decision to withdraw its work from distribution with Newreel is a case in point. After trying several times to reach Griffin via fax and telephone about having their videotapes returned, Black Audio sent a representative, David Lawson, to New York to collect them. As Woolery recalls, one day when he and Johnson were both out of town, Lawson arrived unannounced at Newsreel's office and took $7,000 worth of Black Audio film prints. When he returned for more tapes the next day, the staff, including Woorlery, who had come back to confront Lawson, had him arrested. Seven police officers came to the scene and hauled Lawson off to jail, where he was forced to spend the night.

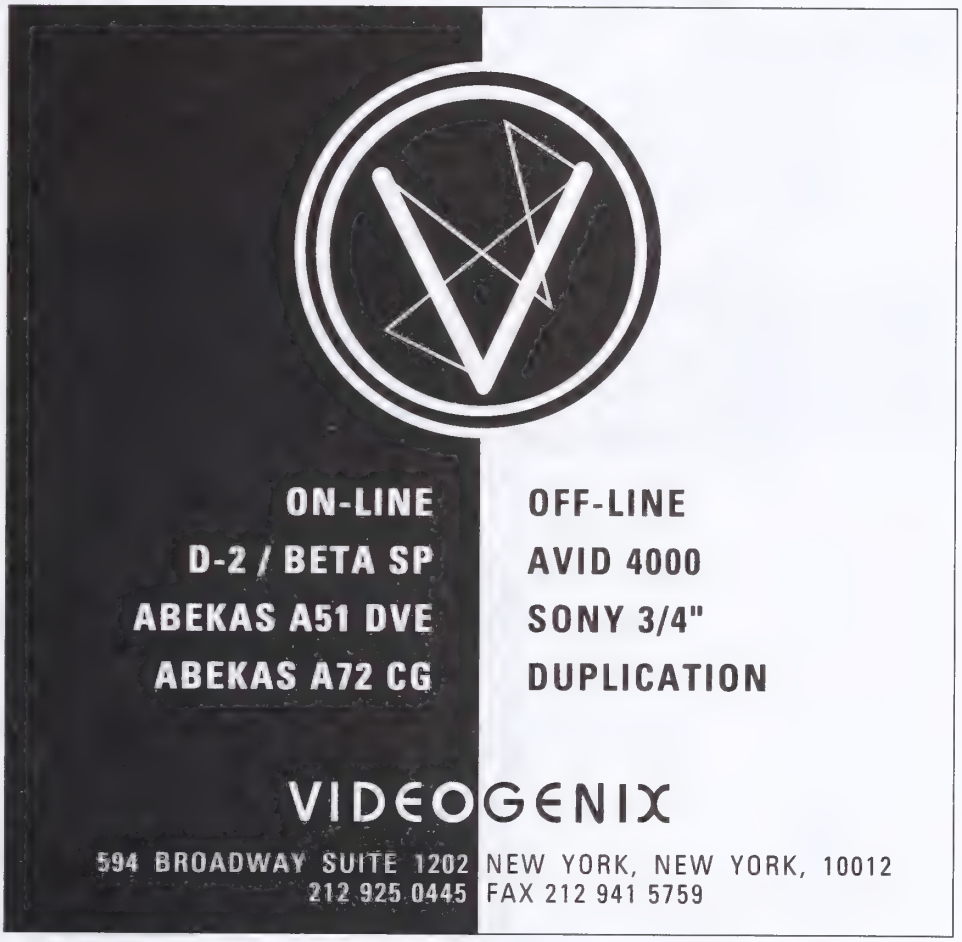
Lawson subsequently wrote a scathing article about the event for a British Film Institute publication. "They say the world of filmmaking is full of sharks and charlatans, geniuses and mavericks. I can certainly attest to the first two," Lawson began and launched into a full-scale attack on Third World's practices before concluding, "I would advise any filmmaker who has their films with Third World Newsreel to withdraw them at the earliest possible moment and to check their royalties from the signing of the contract."

The dispute between Griffin and her former employees, publicized in Johnson and Woolery's letter, can easily be conceived as a personal power struggle. But it also brings to light the problems that many older nonprofits must address in the course of professionalization, including employee benefits, delegation of power and responsibilities, and employee access to information.

Newsreel began its self-examination in August 1992 when it received a small grant from the NEA as an investment in long-range planning and, if necessary, restructuring. The organization then developed a self-assessment and proposal in consultation with Jimenez. Based on the NEA's approval of its proposal, Newsreel could receive increased funding (approximately $16,000 per year for three years, which must be matched three to one).

Despite numerous shake-ups in recent months, Third World has survived the first stage of the grueling advancement process, and there are signs that it could emerge as a stronger organization. A number of moves were initiated through the NEA advancement process. According to Jimenez, decisions made included developing policies regarding fiscal sponsorship, production, and exhibition; professionalizing distribution; and placing a moratorium on new production. When the NEA process began, Newsreel's board, which Griffin describes as "relatively inactive," consisted of Al Santana, VilmaCelia Chong, Allan Siegel (one of







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Newsreel's founders), and Dr. Kwando Kinshasha. Newsreel has since applied for and received funding from the MacArthur Foundation to implement an interim phase of development in which a steering committee could be formed.

The steering committee will help restructure the board, choose a more democratic, active governance structure, and restaff the organization. It includes Jane Delgado, former executive director of the Association of Hispanic Arts, currently an NEA advancement consultant; Ruby Lerner of the Association for Independent Video- and Filmmakers; Alexa Birdsong, associate director of Jazz at Lincoln Center; Lisa Miller, former board member of North Star Fund; and filmmaker Al Santana, as well as Griffin, Takagi, new office manager Kenyatta Funderburk, and workshop director Herman Lew. At this writing, Griffin planned to have a new staff in place by November 1.

Artists support Newsreel both for its legacy and for recent staff-initiated projects. Videomaker Cheryl Dunye says, "[Newsreel] has been successful in creating special programs around distributing the new wave of gay and lesbian works and works of color." She points to "D'Ghetto Eyes," a touring program organized by Johnson, as one example. Tom Poole of the television series Not Channel Zero adds that he thinks of Newsreel, the series' distributor for two years, as "a guardian; they've been inspiring to us."

Funders are also optimistic about the structural changes in the works at Third World. "Amid the regrettably small number of organizations that produce and distribute work by artists of color, Third World Newsreel is a shining light," said NEA spokesperson Brian O'Doherty. "We at the NEA's Media Arts Program want that light to shine ever brighter. We hope that the arduous self definition in which [Newsreel] is engaged will underline its importance and point towards its future."

LAURA U. MARKS

Laura U. Marks is a writer and film programmer living in Rochester, New York.

MEDIAMAKERS APPLAUD ALEXANDER APPOINTMENT

The battle over the National Endowment for the Arts' coveted position of chair came to a quiet close in September when Jane Alexander sailed through a Congressional confirmation hearing. In a swift 17-0 vote by the Senate Labor and Human Resources Committee, Alexander received repeated adulation from Senators of all political bents, garnering support from even the most unexpected, such as Jesse Helms (R-North Carolina), an avid NEA foe. During the hearing, Senator Howard Metzenbaum (D-Ohio) captured the essence of the event when he joked, "I thought we were here for a confirmation, not a deification." Martin Mawyer from the Christian Action Network, which opposed Alexander's nomination,

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Jane Alexander

Photo: Martha Swope Photography, courtesy NEA

made a similar statement when he told *The New York Times* that, "This was basically nothing but a love fest."

The ease of Alexander's confirmation relates to the widely held belief that her presence represents long-awaited change for the NEA. After years of dispute that led to questions concerning the very existence of the endowment, Alexander, a woman with little administrative experience but much visibility as a respected artist, appears to many politicians and arts advocates as just the person to quiet the political fury and reinforce the idea that the NEA is a mainstream operation.

Steering clear of past involvement in politically charged projects—such as her role in anti-nuclear films like American Playhouse's *Testament*—Alexander, an actress and film producer who recently starred in the Broadway hit *The Sisters Rosensweig*, focused her opening statement to the Senate committee on her personal connection to the arts. Beginning with her first trip to the ballet at six years of age, which ignited her desire to perform, she described her life as one wholly dedicated to the pursuit of art through stage and screen. Now, willing to give up her acting career at age 53, she articulated her enthusiasm for the NEA position as a need to give something back to the world of art in which she is immersed.

Outlining her goals as chair, Alexander spoke of educating the nation not only in the value of art, but in the true mission of the endowment as well. She also spoke to the politics of her position by stating, "The endowment is too important to be misused by some who disseminate misinformation for their own ends or attack the endowment as a campaign platform. Should the Senate confirm me, I cannot promise that under my chairmanship the arts will be free of controversy... I can, however, assure Congress that I will follow the statutory guidelines on funding to the very best of my ability to insure that grants are given for the highest degree of artistic merit and excellence."

President Clinton, announcing Alexander's nomination on August 6, extoled her virtues as an ambassador for the arts and as a step away from "the problems of the past," describing her as "superbly qualified to lead the endowment into a new era of excellence that encourages the involvement of all Americans." Her main competition for the position was Deborah Sale, Clinton's campaign aide and former executive director of the Federal Council on the Arts and Humanities. While Sale has the saavy and skills of a Washington insider, the Clinton Administration ulimately opted for Alexander, with her high public profile and ability to serve as an effective spokeperson for the arts to the American public.

The only negative reaction to Alexander came, not surprisingly, from the Christian Action Network who actively lobbied against her. Reiterating a familiar fear of the religious right, Tom Kilgannon, communications director of the network, told the *Washington Post*, "We just don't think someone from Hollywood should be running the NEA. We think she will tend to place the interests of the Hollywood elite or the advocates of the far left higher than the interests of Middle America." Ironically, throughout her nomination Alexander has consistently been positioned as the egalitarian nominee who will always consider the needs of all Americans.

Surprisingly, not one person at the subcommittee hearing, including her single opponent, made an issue out of the report by the *New York Times* that Alexander literally lost over $1 million of her own money last spring when James Powers, her financial advisor, transfered her and her husband's money into his account by impersonating her over the phone—a point which could have been used by her opponents to challenge her ability to handle money.

The peace that Alexander brings to the NEA debates has a negative side-effect. In the effort to redeem the endowment's image, many crucial issues were downplayed for the sake of a smooth confirmation. Most conspicuously overlooked was the continued presence of the "decency standard," instated in late 1990, which requires the endowment to take into consideration "general standards of decency" when awarding grants. Although subsequently ruled unconstitutional, the Department of Justice is in the process of appealing this decision. In an attempt to move away from the decency standard dispute, members of the House of Representatives side-stepped any mention of it during the hearings on NEA reauthorization, which had just come to a close at press time. One positive development in the two-year reauthorization bill was the inclusion of the Gunderson/Slaughter Amendment, which freezes NEA grants to any state that has reduced its state arts funding out of proportion to other program cuts. The legislation moves to the Senate in November.

It is assumed that once Alexander gets settled

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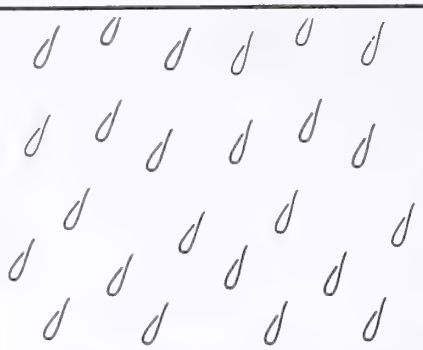
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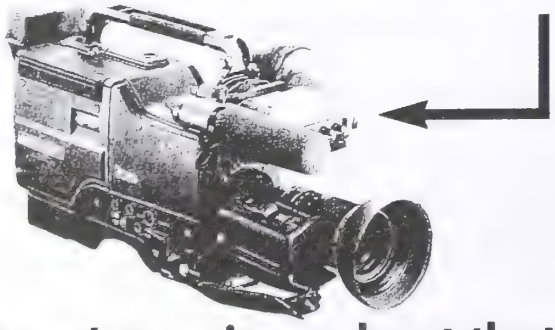


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in her new post, she will address these types of issues directly, but artists and activists will have to keep the pressure on to ensure that the decency standard and other thorny issues aren't overlooked in an attempt to achieve political tranquility.

To most artists, Alexander represents the hope that the public will now embrace the NEA, causing the funding process to move more smoothly. An incredibly wide variety of individuals and organizations have come together in their support for her, all seeking the same peace. A press release and action packet from the People for the American Way Action Fund mentions her integrity and unquestioned devotion, seeing her as one who will defuse political tensions. Helen Brunner, director of the National Association of Artists Organizations, mentioned that "Alexander's public persona will enable her to communicate with the American people and make a public case for the agency." And Judith Golub, executive director of The American Arts Alliance, put it succinctly when she said, "She is a consensus builder."

Alexander has also proven her alliance to independent filmmakers by offering her services as a narrator to a number of independent documentaries, including the original version of Mark Mori and Susan Robinson's *Building Bombs*, and most recently, Robert Richter's documentary for PBS, *Ben Spock—Baby Doctor*.

Although the full impact of Alexander's appointment is yet to be seen, her nomination, at least for now, allows artists to disengage themselves from the attack-react position they have been holding for the last few years. There is hope again for a thriving artistic community where one will not be penalized for controversial content, but judged on the artistic merits of his or her work.

SUE MURRAY

Sue Murray is the editorial assistant for The Independent.

SEQUELS

Mark Mori's **Coalition vs. PBS Censorship** remains a thorn in the Public Broadcasting Service's side. The coalition arranged a meeting with Jennifer Lawson, executive vice president of national programming and promotion services for PBS, which took place in New York in late September. On the agenda were a number of items, including convincing PBS to reconsider WNET's decision not to rebroadcast or distribute Nina Rosenblum and Bill Miles' *Liberators: Fighting on Two Fronts In World War II* ["Too Little Too Late: Miles and Rosenblum Defend Liberators' Accuracy," June 1993] and reminding the broadcasting service of its legal requirement to accept a significant portion of its programming from independent producers.

How did the coalition fare? According to the coalition, Lawson said she would "take another look" at *Liberators*, conduct a point-by-point review of WNET's report on the film, and report her

conclusions to the filmmakers. However, she denied a request to rebroadcast *Liberators*, even if the rebroadcast is paired with a program that addresses both sides of the controversy surrounding the film.

Lawson also told members of the film- and videomaking community at the meeting that the outlook for independent producers at PBS was "not encouraging," in fact, it was "discouraging." PBS is funding far fewer individual programs and more series. The "independently produced" series that PBS has invested in recently include Ken Burns' 18-hour series on baseball and a situation comedy being developed by former Hollywood executive Brandon Tartikoff.

❖ ❖ ❖

The History Channel will be the official name for A&E's upcoming program service. Previously the network was marketed as H-TV ["A&E Makes History with H-TV," August/September 1993]. The 24-hour network, which is scheduled to launch in late 1994, will feature historical documentaries, movies, and miniseries.

❖ ❖ ❖

Patrick Scott was named executive director of the National Alliance for Media Education (NAME) in September. Scott, who served on the National Alliance of Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC) board of directors from 1985 and co-chaired with Gail Silva from 1988 to 1991, replaced Robin White at NAME.

NAME is currently working on a database of media educators ["What's in NAME's Name?" April 1993] to be completed and published as a directory in the spring of 1994. Those who wish to be included in the database should contact Scott at (213) 483-0216.

Dalida Maria Benfield [Talking Heads, June 1993] was named program director of the Chicago-based Women in the Director's Chair. Benfield, a film- and videomaker who has also taught and curated, joined the organization in August. Her productions include *Women of Pilsen*, an oral history project with Chicana women in Chicago and *Canal Zone*, an experimental documentary examining the impact of U.S. colonialism in Panama on her family's lives.

ERRATA

In the October 1993 Media Clips section, a photo from the feature *Kiss It Goodbye* was improperly identified as a production filmed at the Shooting Gallery in Manhattan. In fact it was not. Apologies for the error.

While congratulating Robert Richter on his 25-year career as a filmmaker, we misidentified his film *Ben Spock—Baby Doctor*, which will air on *Nova*.

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HIGH ANXIETY AT THE ANGELIKA

The Independent Feature Film Market

MICHELE SHAPIRO AND SUE MURRAY

Desperately seeking distribution: Three examples of the lengths to which filmmakers go at the IFFM to publicize their screenings.

Photos: Michele Shapiro







Makers, makers everywhere. This year, the 15th annual Independent Feature Film Market (IFFM) played host to approximately 700 film- and videomakers, 150 to 200 more than last year, according to Rachael Shapiro, who codirected this year's market with Jane Wright. The walls of the Angelika Theater on Houston Street in New York City, home to the market since 1989, burst at the seams during the week-long marathon of screenings, panel discussions, Meet the Buyer gatherings, breakfast symposia, and parties. Although the number of buyers present at this year's IFFM, approximately 200, remained consistent with last year, the total number of projects screened jumped by 45 percent. The market, advertised as a nonselective event that everyone must pay to attend, actually turned away 35 to 40 projects, mostly shorts, says Shapiro, who based her decisions on the "presentability and marketability" of the films and videos. "We want a comprehensive program. If there are eight films on motorcycles, we will weed some out. We don't accept exploitation and pornography," she continues, "and we can only screen a certain number of videos, so they are the first to be turned away. Then we look at length."

Changes instituted at this year's market included orientations in New York and Los Angeles prior to the event, a buyers lounge, a new documentary section, and second screenings (on a first-pay, first-serve basis) at the Public Theater. These were the result of a survey conducted after last year's IFFM, and Shapiro plans to send this year's attendees a similar survey.

To gain a better understanding of the market from the differing perspectives of buyers and makers, reporters for *The Independent* spent time with both and, in the two reports that follow, offer a glimpse into the travails and triumphs of the only market of its kind in the U.S.

The Filmmakers' P.O.V.

Sunday, September 26, 2:30 p.m.

I am at a restaurant on lower Broadway with Susan Todd and Andy Young, the husband-and-wife documentarians who are awaiting the market's kickoff seminar. Two of the seven people at my table are participating in the panel: actor and director Edward James Olmos, whom I recognize immediately from *Miami Vice* and *Stand and Deliver*, and an older man with white hair and beard, who I later learn is Robert M. Young, Andy Young's father. The senior Young both directed *Roosters*, which stars Olmos and will be screened Monday evening at the uptown Angelika 57, and executive produced Olmos' *American Me*, a dramatic feature about gang violence that served as the impetus for *Lives in Hazard*, Todd and Young's documentary to be screened at this year's market.

Olmos, a family friend of the filmmakers, saw the possibilities for a documentary about the gang members who served as extras in *American Me* when he began filming in 1991. He suggested to Todd and Young, who were then completing postproduction on *Children of Fate*, a documentary about life and death in a Sicilian family that later won the Grand Jury Prize for Best Documentary at the Sundance Film Festival, that they fly out to Los Angeles and interview East L.A. gang members and inmates at Folsom State Prison, where he would later shoot. The couple seized the opportunity, and the result is *Lives in Hazard*, a 57-minute documentary narrated by Olmos and largely funded by a $300,000 grant from the Justice Department. The first public screening outside of the market is scheduled to take place at the Rikers Island prison on Friday afternoon for an audience of juvenile offenders.

I chose to focus on Todd and Young's promotion and marketing strategy at this year's IFFM because I knew they already had experience dealing with the market's carnivalesque atmosphere. Two years ago they screened *The Spirit of Kuna Yala*, a documentary filmed in Panama. Last year they screened both a work-in-progress (*Lives in Hazard*) and a completed film (*Children of Fate*). But as they wolf down lunch and explain their strategy for the next 48 hours, I realize Todd and Young, assisted in their promotional efforts by the films' coproducers Nick Athas and Daniel A. Haro, will have it easier than most. Due to their success with *Children of Fate*, the couple was asked by the Independent Feature Project (IFP), IFFM's organizers, to speak at Monday morning's documentary orientation. "It definitely may be easier for us now since we got a fair amount of attention from *Children*," Todd admits, "which is good because we don't like to be too self-promotional."

The couple's publicity machine has already been cranking for a few weeks. Focusing on TV



This young gang member, here enacting a drive-by shooting in Edward James Olmos' *American Me*, served as the poster child for Susan Todd and Andy Young's documentary, *Lives in Hazard*.

Courtesy filmmakers

distribution because of the length of their work, they contacted staff from *P.O.V.*, ZDF, La Sept, Channel 4, HBO, PBS, and other outlets, a few of whom expressed interest when they viewed the 10-minute work-in-progress last year. Prior to the market, the producers were already negotiating with NBC to screen the documentary in primetime. They will follow up on Monday with handwritten reminders, stuffed into the buyers' mailboxes. Todd considers a well-designed poster an important "weapon" in attracting both buyers and other makers to screenings. This year, for the first time, the couple was able to afford a two-color (black and red) poster with an alarming photograph of a young boy wielding a loaded pistol. They also are armed with 30-40 press kits, hundreds of one-sheets, and eight to 10 videos of the documentary, as well as *Lives in Hazard* badges, which everyone at the table sports.

Todd and Young, who met as undergraduates at Harvard and shot their first film together in 1985, agree on one thing they will *not* do at this year's market: jump to commit to a buyer. "We will wait as long as we can before signing any deals. We jumped a little too quickly with *Children*." The couple penned a deal with First Run Features after last year's market, long before the film became the talk of the festival circuit.

Monday, September 27, 10 a.m.

Climbing the steps of the Angelika, I am flanked by a bear, an angel, some guy with an arrow through his head, and a band of sign-toting, moose turd-bearing Alaskans, all of whom shove flyers in my face with the zeal of perfume spritzers at Macy's.

I find Todd and Young seated in the room's epicenter: a cluster of tables and chairs sandwiched between the long, cloth-covered tables rented by the likes of Duart, the New York City Mayor's Office, and Eastman Kodak, and the theater's gourmet coffee bar. While hundreds of makers and buyers hover around the registration table and the hospitality desk, the couple sits calmly amidst the clamor. By arriving early, around 9:15, they were able to garner coveted spots for their *Lives in Hazard* posters on various columns around the room.

At the documentary orientation, which occurs simultaneously with ones for scripts, features, shorts, and works-in-progress, Todd and Young field questions and offer advice like old pros. "It takes time to find an audience and a buyer," Young offers. "Last year we got lots of offers from festivals after *Children* screened, but no firm offers from buyers. Sundance didn't say they wanted it either. We had to submit a tape like everyone else." Also, while *Children* was rejected from Toronto last year, it was accepted this year. Todd adds that "the market has been a success for us every year. It can be a stepping stone for getting funding for your next project."

Todd suggests following up with buyers who attend the screening and obtaining a list of those who screen your tape at the IFP's video library. Young adds that makers must not take it personally when buyers walk out midway through screenings. "It's just the way a market works."

After the orientation, I bump into Nick Athas, *Hazard*'s producer, who has spent the morning talking up the film. He says he thinks there are fewer foreign buyers present this year—the result of too many aggressive Americans ramming product down their throats. Since Athas is also here in a buyer's capacity, representing his production company, Olmos Productions, Inc., and wearing the buyers' green badge that is a magnet for filmmakers, he knows what it's like on both sides of the fence. "In the future [the IFP] may have to separate buyers even more than they did this year," he suggests. "Or maybe they shouldn't allow makers to be present at the market." What? No more Elvis impersonators? No more lifeguards, fox hunters, go-go boys, and duckmobiles? Be real.

Monday, September 27, 5 p.m.

Todd and Young have spent much of the afternoon at a nearby café, writing personal notes on post-its to approximately 60 European and American television buyers. ("We gave the waitress a big tip and she let us sit for hours," says Todd.)

Since Todd and Young are celebrities in their own right, it's interesting to see Todd a little awestruck when approached by Alan Raymond, who with wife Susan directed the widely acclaimed *The Loud Family* that aired on PBS in the 1970s, as well as *I Am a Promise*, a feature-length documentary on elementary school children in a troubled inner-city neighborhood to screen at this year's market. Raymond tells Todd that she and Young remind him of he and his wife in earlier years, and Todd is thrilled.

Tuesday, September 28, 10:15 a.m.

The mid-sized theater in which *Lives in Hazard* is about to screen is approximately three-quarters full. Although the couple has planned a short speech to introduce the film, the lights dim and the rap music accompanying its opening credits engulfs the theater.

An hour later, the film's closing credits are met with applause and, judging from the lack of doors swinging shut during the screening, it looks as if few departed.

Outside the theater, Olmos, Robert Young, the film's producers, and the filmmakers greet buyers and fellow makers who offer them congratulations. Coproducer Daniel Haro seems pleased by the audience's response. "You could tell people were following the film. They laughed and gasped at all the right places," he says. One buyer from Devillier Donegan stands protectively by the makers. She is interested, but Todd and Young aren't biting—yet.

Meanwhile, upstairs, Paul Zehrer, director of the feature film *Blessing*, about a restless farmgirl's rebellion against her family, says the market is backfiring. "It's just too big and the buyers' lounge is a sign of that. Buyers are turning their badges over." Zehrer, who had a script at the market two years ago, adds that with shorts, it helps to ap-

proach buyers, but with features, they know which ones they want to see. This year more than in past, some makers chose to screen their films as works-in-progress, even though the projects had been completed prior to the market, recognizing that buyers have short attention spans and are far more likely to sit through a well-edited trailer than an entire feature.

Wednesday, September 29, 10:30 a.m.

Todd and Young are nowhere to be found, so I spend some time with Beth Harrison, producer of *Top of the World*. The feature, shot entirely in Denver, Colorado, and funded primarily by the Denver Center for the Performing Arts, is a *Big Chill* for the nineties directed by Cort Tremontin. Harrison rented temporary office space for her week-long stay in New York and sent out more than 100 faxes to prospective buyers; she is determined to close deals for both theatrical and television distribution at the market. A positive review in *Variety* and a successful screening at the Toronto Film Festival should help the film, she says. "Four or five buyers are interested, and we're trying to get HBO and Bravo to attend tomorrow's screening." Harrison adds that she chose to attend the market because she thought "the film's quality would stand out." She is concerned, however, that because the first 10 minutes of the film are slow, buyers may lose patience.

Wednesday, September 29, 5 p.m.

I spot Susan Todd at her favorite lobby table. Last night when she and Young returned home after their screening, there was a message from HBO on the answering machine. The cable network is possibly interested in purchasing *Lives* and in funding one of Todd and Young's future projects. They will meet with HBO execs from the *America Undercover* series tomorrow. Todd is also pleased that Cinemax has made an offer for the television rights to *Children of Fate*. In addition, she and her husband have been invited to festivals in Munich and Amsterdam.

I run into Zehrer, who also has some good news: Since *Blessing* screened yesterday afternoon, both the Berlin and Sundance festivals have expressed interest and a number of distributors have followed up, although he doesn't name names.

Wednesday, September 29, 10 p.m.

The Sundance party at the Supper Club in midtown is, as always, a crowd pleaser. I speak with Chaim Bianco, who codirected the feature *The Pope of Utah*, a dark comedy about a TV evangelist. It's his first time at the market, and he says he found the Meet the Buyer sessions, in which makers can sign up for a 20-minute meeting with buyers, most helpful. But others, such as William Goins, director of *New York Absurdities*, three short films linked by a common theme, were unaware of such sessions. Goins complained that he spent too much time talking to buyers whom he later found out didn't purchase or distribute the kind of film he had made.

Another maker, Patrick Grandaw from San Francisco, said he came to the market with a short film, *The Monkey*, that he directed four years ago and with a new script: a powerful combination. "It's good to have a script in the works," he says. "You can mold it to what the distributor wants."

Matthew Harrison, who had three films in various stages of completion at this year's market, views the IFFM as an opportunity to renew old contacts, and adds that the market catalogue is read by buyers around the world, not just by those who attend the event. He and his three partners in the production/distribution company Film Crash took the opportunity to set up camp at one of Angelika's cafe tables and are selling video cassettes.

Thursday, September 30

Today the word is out that Deidre Fishel's *Risk*, a feature about a painter who becomes involved with an urban drifter she meets on a bus, is the first market film to be snapped up by a domestic theatrical distributor, Northern Arts. Castle Hill, I'm told by Beth Harrison, is interested in distributing *Top of the World*, and she is in negotiations with them. Screenings of *Ninth Street*, *Clean, Shaven*, and *Shimmer* have also created a buzz amongst this year's attendees .

Friday, October 1, 2:30 p.m.

I have forsaken a day of market screenings and a panel discussion on "Positioning the Controversial Documentary," sponsored by Tapestry International, to attend the *Lives in Hazard* screening on Rikers Island.

We meet at the Department of Corrections downtown and bus it to the isolated maximum-security prison; there's a reporter from *Entertainment Weekly*, a woman from HBO, two men from the Board of Education, and the filmmakers. Todd and Young will not answer questions after the screening; that task will go to Olmos, a hero to many of the inner-city teens who are pent up at Rikers for up to 18 months while awaiting their dates in criminal court.

Upon our arrival, we pass through a metal detector and down a long hallway to the chapel where the screening will take place. Hundreds of teenaged boys are herded into the room and sit in rows of wooden pews. We learn that *Lives* will be the focal point of the teens' counseling sessions for months to come.

When the lights dim, the teens, chummy and affectionate with one another, are riveted. They laugh at one of the rappers featured in the documentary because, I later learn, his L.A. style is quite different from New York rap, and they let out a loud gasp when a guard inside Folsom State Prison reveals an arsenal of knives molded from plastic utensils and melted styrofoam cups. Otherwise, they are silent, absorbed by the images projected on the screen.

When the lights come up, Olmos is met by a barrage of questions on the filming of *American Me* and few about the documentary. Disappointment registers on Todd and Young's faces. It has been a long day. A long week. They sit quietly as Olmos basks in the spotlight.

"How many of you have parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, brothers, sisters, or someone you know who's been in jail?" an animated Olmos asks the crowd. Almost all 400 teens raise their hands. "Now how many of you want your children or younger relatives to end up in prison?" Not one hand in the air. "*That's* why we made this film."

As we return our guest passes to the front desk and reboard the bus, both Manhattan and the IFFM seem millions of miles away.

A Buyer's Day at IFFM

Most filmmakers at the IFFM were vying for a single moment with Tapestry International's vice president Nancy Walzog. I, however, was lucky enough to spend an entire afternoon with her.

I meet up with Walzog outside the Angelika on the second day of the market, but for her, IFFM-related work had started weeks earlier. Like most buyers, Walzog and her colleagues at Tapestry have already carefully studied the IFFM catalog (which she calls the "buyer's bible"). This advance work allowed her to be aware of all the films coming to the market, but also, and more importantly for a buyer with limited time, to target those films that fit into Tapestry's niche.

As I join a Meet the Buyer session that Walzog is headlining at 8 Bond Street, she is in the process of describing Tapestry—a New York-based company that distributes both documentary and fictional works for placement primarily in domestic and foreign television markets—and its acquisition process. The audience of 80 to 100 filmmakers, always looking for chances to push their work, seem intent on using the question-and-answer period as a way to introduce their films. Someone asks what she looks for in a documentary. "Anything well done and personal really has a chance," Walzog replies and goes on to say that works which take a personal story and broaden it out particularly catch her attention. As soon as the session comes to an end, masses of filmmakers overwhelm her with introductions and questions.

When we catch up with each other later at the market, Walzog is still being approached by people trying to convince her to attend their screenings. Nonetheless, in the open center of the Angelika, we manage to find a few moments to talk. The market "is a weird, tough place for buyers," Walzog says off the bat. While acknowledging that it plays an important role in the independent community, she wishes that IFFM would decide what it wants to be—a market or a festival. It's difficult for



After Paul Zehrer's *Blessing* screened at IFFM, two top-notch festivals expressed interest, as did several distributors.

Courtesy filmmaker

buyers to get to the screenings, Walzog states, and admits that she views most films on cassette either in IFFM's buyers-only video library, located down the street from Angelika, or at home or the office in the evening.

When viewing cassettes, she watches at least the first five minutes of everything she has marked in her catalog. Or, if something unexpected catches her attention, she'll view that, too. She immediately eliminates works that don't meet Tapestry's technical standards or that she instinctively knows will not work for her company.

As we cross the room to the café, Walzog spies Chris Dellorco, a filmmaker who is here with his fiction short, *Beware of Dog*. Dellorco jokes that all this self-promotion makes him feel "like a used car salesman." He takes a break from his rounds to talk business with Walzog. Dellorco, a first-time filmmaker, has been in been negotiation with Tapestry for a few months now; soon after we sit down, it becomes clear that both distributor and maker have found their match. They hash out their relationship in a casual, friendly way, sipping mineral water and remaining oblivious to the hundreds of market attendees hovering inches away.

IFFM novices are often unaware that many buyers know what they want before the market even opens and may have already made moves to acquire the product. A case in point this year was *Risk*, which was acquired by John Lawrence Rae, the chairman of Northern Arts, after its screening at the IFFM. While the acquisition was highly publicized by the IFP, the truth of the matter is that Northern Arts already had planned to pick up the film after its intial screening at the Tribeca Film Center's First Look series; they simply found the market to be a convenient venue to make an offer. As Rae observed, "It's really hard to discover something at the IFFM that you haven't already seen or have a good idea about."

Dellorco and Walzog wrap up their conversation, and Walzog is quickly approached by two or three more makers. As we try to extricate ourselves from the commotion of Angelika's lobby, we run into David Van Taylor, whose critically acclaimed documentary *Dream Deceivers*, about the trial in which rocker Judas Priest is charged with the murder of two teens who committed suicide after listening to his album, is distributed by Tapestry. He and Walzog decide to move across the street to the more peaceful environment of the buyers' lounge in order to map out a proposal for a new documentary that they plan to pitch to the PBS series *Alive TV* the following day.

The buyers' lounge, a new addition to the market this year, is fairly empty when we arrive; a few buyers are browsing through the overflowing contents of their mailboxes and discussing the day's events. The lounge, a large, loft-like space tastefully furnished in rented faux antiques, contains space for buyers to meet, work, and screen cassettes. In years past, the IFFM has only a few screening stations set up; now there are 12. This enables buyers to have the time and space to view everything they wish. This addition to the market is something Walzog clearly appreciates.

It doesn't take long for Van Taylor and Walzog to work out their strategy. As we head back to the hustle and bustle of the market, Walzog outlines some pointers for producers looking for distribution. Before a filmmaker takes a mortgage out on the house, she suggests, he or she should consider a few critical matters: what's already out there on the subject, possible venues, and whether the subject or idea actually has a marketable niche. But most importantly, she declares, filmmakers need to be passionate about their work, but shouldn't let it become so precious that it can't be edited, changed, or put on the shelf for awhile.

Rae, from Northern Arts, had mentioned this, too, suggesting that filmmakers consider the potential market in the earliest stages of their work,

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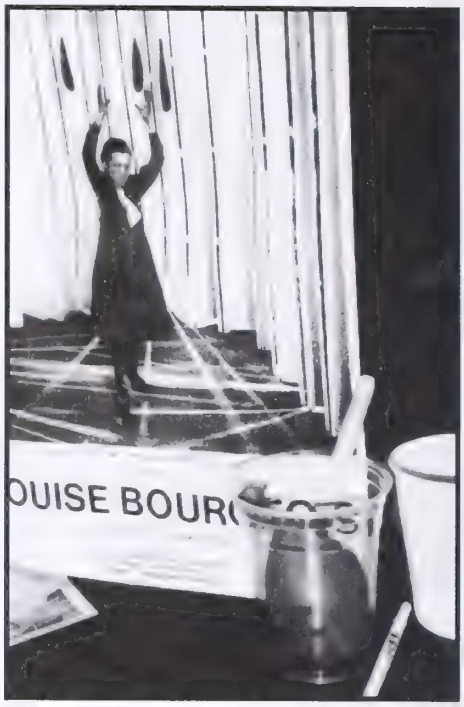
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The art of promotion at the 1993 IFFM.

Photo: Michele Shapiro

without compromising their passion for it. Rae also professes that makers should take the time to get to know distributors prior to festivals or markets such as IFFM.

As we approach the Angelika, we notice two men in costume sitting in a giant mobile duck. We listen for awhile as they try to pitch their film, *It'll Have Blinking Eyes and a Moving Mouth.* Once we move on, I ask Walzog what she thinks about this approach. "It's important to do everything that you can do to get name recognition, but it's also important not to take this stuff too seriously," she says. I get the impression that these tactics don't impress her. She continues, "Buyers are more interested in people as talent, rather than actually purchasing the film they've brought to the market." She also claims to listen for a buzz on a particular work. "If everyone thinks that it's great, then we are probably interested."

Walzog's work around the IFFM will not end anytime soon. She will continue to screen and consider films included in IFFM long after the market is over. In fact, when I call her a week later, she feels it's still too early to discuss the true outcome of the market. John Lawrence Rae tells me that the timeline for acquisition extends long past the week of the market. "You can walk away with a commitment and perhaps even the rough outline of a deal, but walking away with a bona fide deal would be difficult in that short of a time." Like Walzog, Rae thinks that the IFFM is an ideal place to make contacts and see what's out there. "It's a great time for independents to get their day in the sun, regardless of the outcome."

Michele Shapiro and Sue Murray are, respectively, managing editor and editorial assistant of The Independent.



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Students Convene at the Telluride Film Festival

NANCY J. COHEN

If it's possible to find a democratic spirit in these wobbly nineties, then the Tellluride Film Festival is a great place to start. There are no secret parties to crash, long lines to wade through, or papparazzi to feel rejected by. People go to Telluride to discuss and enjoy artful films, not to hustle. Hollywood insiders show up for this 20-year-old festival, held in the mountains of southwest Colorado, but they're primarily there as film enthusiasts, not dealers. It's a venue for about 36 films—a good mix of independent productions, documentaries, a few studio productions, some rare classics, and about six student films.



A Texas-style hoedown was part of the opening night festivities at the Telluride Film Festival.

Photo Nancy J Cohen

It was in this alpine environment that I found myself on Labor Day weekend. I attended as part of a special program for film students that the festival's sponsor, the National Film Preserve, created five years ago, with financial aid from Steven Spielberg. The special student pass provides admission to selected films, intimate symposia with filmmakers, and all of the festival's social events. Housing and travel are the responsibility of the student.

For admission, we were asked to write an essay on a film that affected us, and the way we want to make film. I chose *The Beast from Hollow Mountain*, a fifties American/Mexican horror film that evoked a strong response at a tender age. Next year the question will be different, with the hope that the selection process will be made easier for the organizers. They received about 75 applications and could accept only 50, which they consider a good class size.

Telluride's student program is not only for film majors. But those who aren't clearly feel the attraction. When Trevor McArthur, an education/history major from Nebraska, met idol *Civil Wars* documentarian Ken Burns, he began to give serious thought to switching majors.

The faculty for the student program consists of three people: Howard Movshovitz, the film critic of the *Denver Post*, also teaches film studies at the University of Colorado. Linda Williams is a film professor at the University of California-Irvine, an editor of *Film Quarterly*, and author of a book on film and pornography, *Hard Core: Power, Pleasure, and the Frenzy of the Visible*. Between them they have a relaxed manner and are much less egotistical than most of the New York "meet the filmmaker" teachers. The "Dean," Kate Sibley, is a museum administrator who started working with festival creator Bill Pence 20 years ago. Probably one of her hardest jobs at the festival was giving out the Ralph Lauren-designed baseball caps in a year when suddenly everyone had a large head and there were far too many mediums.

John Boorman, director of *Deliverance*, *Hope and Glory*, and editor of the film book *Projections*, served as this year's festival director. He had the sensitive job of selecting the festival films and creating the students' syllabus. As in the past, Telluride's organizers did not announce the festival program in advance. But for those who had read Boorman's journal in the first volume of *Projections*, it was no surprise that the films he chose were political, difficult, and often dark, including such works as *Raining Stones*, *Naked*, and *Love and Human Remains*. He was also responsible for choosing low-budget independent works like Lodge Kerrigan's *Clean, Shaven*, David Siegel and Scott McGehee's *Suture*, and *Double Blind*, a video-to-film transfer by conceptual artist Sophie Calle. Fortunately, during class he sounded a bit more optimistic, although he did respond to a question about "unseen forces" (which he refers to so frequently in *Projections*) by suggesting that "the greater the goodness, the greater the evil is attracted to it." Such comments provided food for thought for those idealistic filmmakers hoping to take their goods to the Hollywood market.

Our schedule for the weekend was rigorous: screenings every two to four hours, with discussion sessions every morning and afternoon. The

first night, we watched Wayne Wang's *The Joy Luck Club*, but by one in the morning most of us trotted home to sleep off the jet lag. A few hardy souls found strength for a beer, but, as we all discovered sooner or later, at that altitude a little goes a long way. Early morning discussions took place at the Steaming Bean, a lively café that serves frozen cappuccinos, which bolstered the conversation and kept our eyes propped open from one screening to the next.

One of our earliest symposiums was with the eternal youth, Ken Burns. He spoke of the importance of a good narrator or, as he coined it, "God's stenographer," and how he hires amateurs during a production to guard him from descending into a stylized documentary formula. After that we met German director Wim Wenders, whose non-sequel to *Wings of Desire*, *Faraway So Close*, was screened at the festival. Wenders was gorgeous, poetic, and pissed. His anger—at the amount of Hollywood product devouring European screen time and at Americans' resistence to foreign films—found sympathetic ears in our group. When asked for a word of counsel to young filmmakers he offered, "You can't trust beautiful images—so much relies on recipes. Rely on your heart and your eye, but especially your heart."

On the whole, the students were well-informed and interested in the minutia of filmmaking. Most came from Dartmouth, USC, and other schools on the coasts, though midwestern and southern universities were also represented. There was a lot of give and take in the discussions and little or no preoccupation with "stars." We were spoken to as if we were already filmmakers.

Friday was the opening night "feed"—an abundance of free barbecue eatins', a real country band, and even a Texas line dance to the song "Achey Breaky Heart." The picnic was an odd warm-up to the evening event: a tribute to Ken Loach, socialist director and voice of the English working class. Excerpts from Loach's earlier films like *Riff Raff* were shown, followed by a screening of *Raining Stones*, the story of an unemployed man who is determined to buy his daughter a decent dress for her first communion, which won the Jury prize in Cannes this year. Loach's semi-improvisatory films use mostly natural lighting and evoke raw and disturbing emotions. A similarly styled film screened later that night was the tough and riveting *Naked* by Loach countryman and *High Hopes* director, Mike Leigh. Because of the film's violent scenes towards women, many students boycotted it or left early. Both films made good fodder for lively group discussions.

One test of stamina was the four-hour documentary about London's failing zoo, Molly Dineen's *Ark*. A zoo gamekeeper remarks in the film that "Koalas have a very annoying habit of dropping dead," but most of the audience stayed awake and riveted by *Ark*, as was evidenced by the swarm of questions that bombarded Dineen after the screening. The entire film was handheld; Dineen used a tripod only when she feared an

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elephant, unhappy about being moved into a truck, might kick the cameraperson.

The second major tribute, held at Telluride's Opera House, was for the great cinematographer and one-time recluse John Alton. His work on *An American in Paris* and many of the most stunning black and white *noir* films of the forties have made him a living legend. At a youthful 91, he was a festival highlight for students and Telluride audiences. People were particularly excited about wearing 3-D glasses for his 1953 film *I, The Jury*. Kansas student Peter Slowey was kicking himself for not taking a photo of the audience, which included directors Bernard Tavernier, Wim Wenders, and John Boorman, all in 3-D specs.

Every day at lunchtime, seminars open to the public were held in Elks Park. With topics such as "A New Generation of Directors," the sessions included Q&As with independent director Lodge Kerrigan of *Clean, Shaven* and student director Daryl Hannah. These talks lacked the focus of the more intimate student-only sessions held indoors, but they offered some good ray-catching time and a chance to eat.

Since Telluride attracts its share of festival scouts, agents, and buyers, the festival offers filmmakers an opportunity to make connections with such types in a low-keyed atmosphere. In between films and seminars, I was kept busy trying to find Pierre Rissient, assistant director on *Breathless* and film scout emeritus for the Cannes Film Festival. I finally caught up with him at the Steaming Bean. He said he personally discovered Jane Campion (*The Piano*) as well as fifties actress and director Ida Lupino, and was the first festival person outside China to promote Chen Kaige (*Farewell My Concubine*). What does he look for? "When you see it, you know it," he responded. One of the problems he finds with today's independents is that they are all trying to seduce the studios or "audition for Hollywood." He also felt that many of the indies are too "frivolous" and not "political."



Among other filmmakers interested in schmoozing Monsieur Rissient were *Suture* directors David Siegel and Scott McGehee. At our seminar, the two inspired us by admitting that they were barely out of graduate school themselves. And it was even more impressive to learn that they have remained good friends even after codirecting two shorts and a feature.

One of the nicest things about Telluride is the opportunity it offers to screen forgotten film gems. *The Last Stop*, a film about the female experience in Auschwitz by 86-year-old former prisoner Wanda Jakubowska, was introduced by Columbia University's multi-lingual Annette Insdorff. Apparently there is only one print of *The Last Stop*, so this was a real treat. Also screened were the rarely seen Swedish documentaries of Arne Sucksdorf and Stefan Jarl. The two were generous with information at our symposium, and Jarl gave me a cost-saving idea for creating my own stock footage by shooting in black-and-white film and then stepping on it.

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Among the guest speakers at Telluride was Lodge Kerrigan, director of the much-talked-about *Clean, Shaven* (pictured), a portrayal of a schizophrenic's tormented search for his daughter.

Courtesy DSM III Films, Inc.

More free food was available at the Labor Day picnic, followed by a panel on erotica and cinema. The discussion, led by Insdorff with director Susan Seidelman and actress Jennifer Jason Leigh, did not go smoothly. Seidelman and Leigh seemed at ease with the subject, but John Boorman was noticeably not, sticking to his theory of how visually boring the sex act can be on film. Leigh argued that it was a great way to show elements of character. Canadian director Denys Arcand said it was something he liked to get over with quickly. They all seemed to agree that it was a classic formula: raise the desire, throw in an impediment, and *voila*!, sexual tension. Luckily, it started to rain.

One of the oddest moments was at our last symposium with the arrival of Kathleen Kennedy and Frank Marshall, originally producers for Steven Spielberg, now married and independently producing *The Flintstones Movie*. Their kind of filmmaking seemed so much at odds with everything else the festival offered that the student body seemed at a loss for questions. They did offer one piece of useful advice: "Never start a movie before the script is ready." I think they might have been referring to *Jurassic Park*.

Wrapping up the weekend was a final night party, open to students, volunteers, and whomever else had the good fortune to hear about it. Not being able to break through the group that encircled Buck Henry, I introduced myself to *Reversal of Fortune* director Barbet Schroeder and mistakenly congratulated him on his work on *Betrayal*. (He politely pretended not to hear my error.) As a low-budget filmmaker struggling to raise money for my second project, I was comforted to hear that he, too, was having trouble getting his next film off the ground.

The student program organizers gave us frameable certificates of merit and invited us to come back next year as volunteers, or, better, filmmakers. A few students promised to write, while, for my part, I'm looking into a time-share on a Telluride dude ranch.

Nancy J. Cohen directed the documentary My Dinner with Abbie *and is currently working on two other projects.*

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THE FRENCH CONNECTION: PART DEUX

Sunny Side of the Doc and Les Etats Généraux du Documentaire

NATHALIE MAGNAN

Visiting France in the summertime is a pleasurable experience in itself. But now there are two film events around which to plan your next summer vacation: the first, Sunny Side of the Doc, takes place each June in Marseille. The second, Les Etats Généraux du Documentaire (The State of the Documentary), occurs at the end of August in the small village of Lussas. While both events are based in France, they differ greatly in purpose. Sunny Side is a documentary film market and festival set in a big southern city, whereas Les Etats is more of a summer institute for professionals. In Marseille, the focus is on sales. In Lussas, those interested in film gather to tackle theoretical issues.



Inside the Palis du Pharo, where forums for the documentary market and festival Sunny Side of the Doc were held in June.

Photo: J. Alcamo, courtesy Sunny Side of the Doc

Marseille

The countless seductive pleasures that the Mediterranean city provides at the beginning of the summer, including apértifs on the harbor and lunches on the beach, attracted approximately 1,600 professionals from 30 countries to this year's Sunny Side of the Doc market. The number of attendees was up 18.5 percent over 1992. Seventy-two international television channels and 151 buyers were present this year. An additional 150 production companies either had their own booths or shared with others. Seventy percent of those present had attended the market in previous years. While 230 programs produced during the 1992-93 season were presented, more than 2,000 hours of programming were for sale.

Large tents that housed all of the booths were set up outside the Palais du Pharo. Inside were screening rooms for buyers and salons for cocktail receptions, a press room, and buyers' mailboxes. The casual setting was conducive to making connections with both those who produce and those who purchase documentaries.

Although there have always been a small number of Americans attending Marseille, this year a special effort was made to attract producers from the U.S. Jane Weiner, director and producer of Weiner Productions, Inc., organized the market's first American Corner, which consisted of a large, highly visible booth reserved for Americans.

The purpose of the corner, said Weiner, is to help independent makers from the U.S. better understand how business is conducted in Europe and to facilitate initial contact with buyers. Some American producers and production companies at this year's market were Alternate Current, Center for New American Media, Chamba organization, Cobblestone Films, Flower Dragon Productions, Frank Film, J.P. Weiner, State of the Art, and Stephanie Beroes.

Activities that Weiner designed specifically for Americans included a luncheon at the American Consulate with program commissioners from

the BBC, the Discovery Channel, Arts & Entertainment, National Geographic, and PBS. Unfortunately, other commissioners didn't attend the lunch because rumor had it the Americans wouldn't serve good food. But, in fact, the lunch was held at a wonderful villa and the food (local, of course) was far from burgers and french fries.

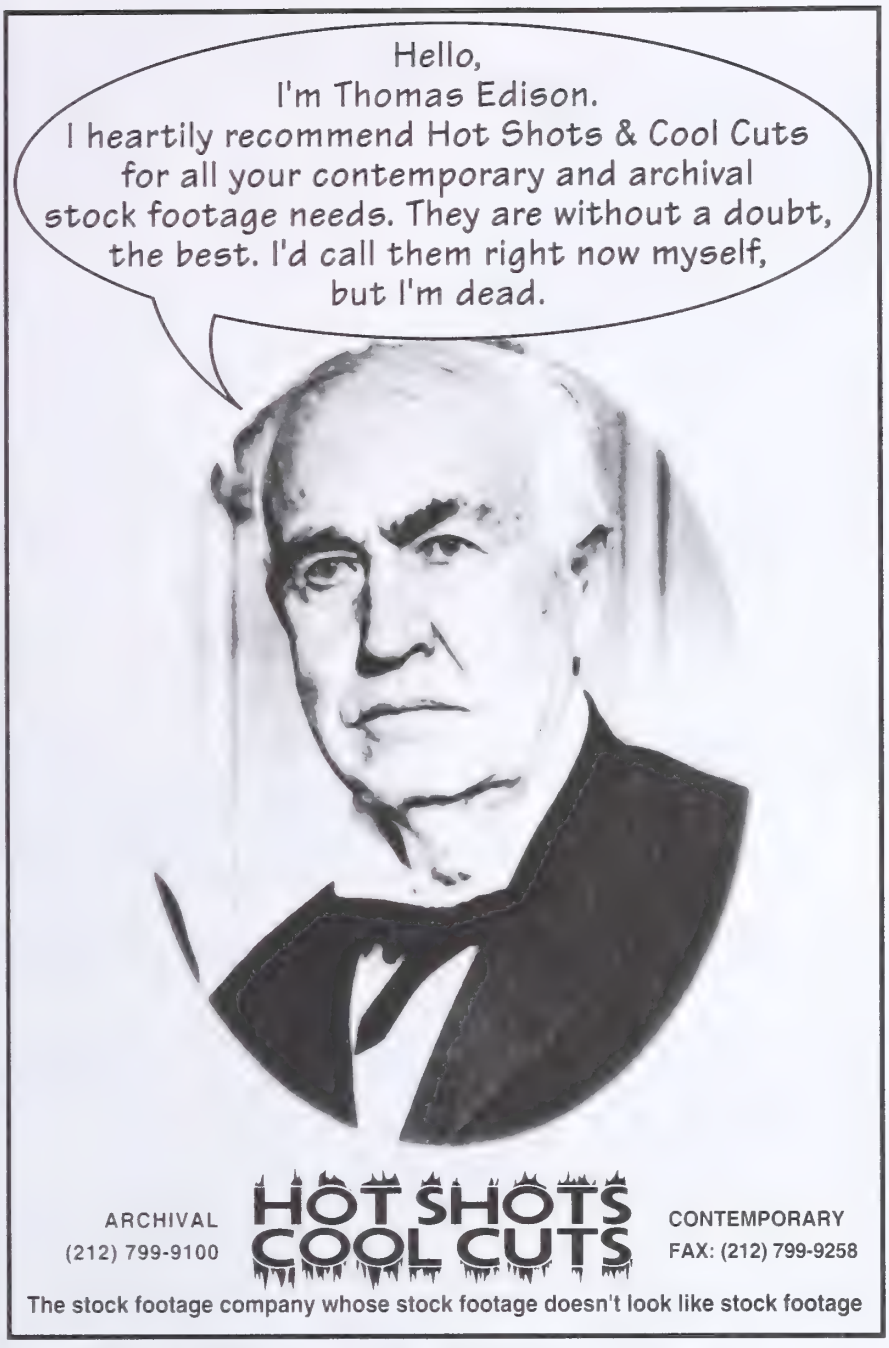
For Joshua Harrison of Cobblestone Films, the people he met in Marseille were a much broader mix than at the Independent Feature Film Market (IFFM), and private meetings with buyers were easier to arrange. Other makers said that at larger markets such as MIPCOM, it's difficult to find their way, whereas at Sunny Side the focus is on documentaries, and the decision makers are present. St. Clair Bourne, president of the Chamba organization, found the market worthwhile because he was able to talk to foreign buyers without being rushed. "In this user-friendly event, it took 10 minutes to figure things out that would have taken six months otherwise," he said. Bourne came with three projects, including one about American emigration to Russia in the 1930s and a second on the Peace Corps in Peru.

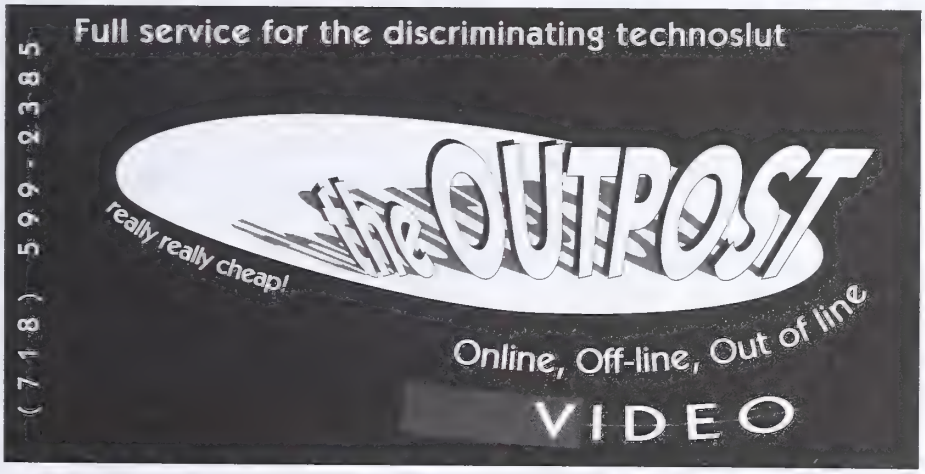
Bourne also found that producers in Europe still operate as if Europe is the entire world, and they don't have a clue about issues such as multiculturalism. So, he added, there is a need to address the buyers directly rather than in writing. And although he got no concrete sales, he did receive positive responses from both French and British buyers, so he "came back [to the U.S]. with a shot in the arm."

Next year, Sunny Side will continue the American Corner. The market is currently looking for producers interested in European coproductions. Such producers will be able to attend the market for $375 each ($750 for two), half what it costs Europeans to attend.

Theme days, including British Day and American Day, explored the state of documentary production in specific countries. The first half of American Day focused on documentary distribution in the States, while the second featured a panel titled, "What Does It Mean To Coproduce with Americans? What Are the Rules of the Game? Is There a Place for Auteur Documentaries in the States?" with Art Kane (WNET), Ruth Peters (National Geographic), Tom Grahms (Discovery Channel), Daniel Schackman (National Geographic), Peter Friedman (*Silverlake Life*), and Geraldine Wazburg (*Educating Peter*). Although some Americans said they found the workshops useful, others thought they offered little more than a series of canned speeches and that to be more informative, the discussions needed to be more specific.

This year, Sunny Side also offered attendees a series of symposiums. The main topic was coproduction funding in tough economic times. The symposiums were either presentations by different funding institutions, such as the Institut National de l'Audio-visual (INA) and le Centre Bruxellois de l'Audi-visual or discussions among





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producers, who later accepted questions from audience members. One workshop was designed to assist producers in their search for coproducers. Producers and commissioning editors on the panel picked a project and simulated researching funds for it. Some of the discussions were very technical, while others focused on broader topics. One, for example, "Is TV Journalism the Future of Documentaries on TV or Is It the Contrary?" featured Paul Larose (Radio-Canada), Nicolas Fraser (Channel 4), Alain Fountain (Channel 4), André Singer (BBC), Jacques Virendeels (RTBF), Giovanni Miloni (Rai 2), André Gasut (RTSR), Catherine Lamour (Canal+), Thierry Garrel (Arte), Daniel Renouf (System TV), Jean Louis Saporito (Point du Jour), Frédéric Laffond (Interscoop), and Hervé Brusini (Théopresse).

To follow up on the initial contacts initiated during the market, Sunny Side organizes brunches once a month in Paris that give producers the chance to meet again with institutional or commissioning editors.

Paired with the Sunny Side market is a film festival, which has also grown in importance each year. The competitive festival highlights the year's documentary production, with works such as Robert Kramer's *Point de Depart* and Annette Duterre's *L'Homme Libre*. This year's festival opened with Tom Joslin and Peter Friedman's *Silverlake Life: The View from Here*, which was simultaneously broadcast this year in France and Germany on Arte, the European cultural channel. Festival sidebars included 13 films from Britain's BBC, Channel 4, and ITV, 10 films from Africa, and a collection of historical films organized by La Bibliothéque de France.

This year ADDOC, a year-old French organization of documentary filmmakers that organizes monthly discussions on documentary related issues in Paris, started a series of discussions on "Fear of the Other." Both Jean Louis Comolli, a documentary filmmaker and ex-editor-in-chief of *Les Cahiers du Cinéma*, and filmmaker Robert Kramer made some interesting points on the relation of fear to desire in both films and in society. Comolli suggested that "Today, socially there is fear without desire. So we ought to rediscover desire even with the cost of fear." The discussion continued a few months later in Lussas and was written about in *Le Monde* for the entire month of September.

Lussas

Producers may have the last word in Marseille, but in Lussas filmmakers are at the forefront. Set in a tiny southern village with only one main street and a few houses, the five-day program accommodates people with varying budgets. While some attendees chose to camp out, others opted to stay in an old high-class hotel in one of the surrounding towns. During the event, 2,500 people—including filmmakers, producers, students, media professors, heads of institutions, commissioning editors, and even bankers—take over the village's



Rue Principale, the main drag of Lussas, a small village that served as the location for the Les Etats Generaux du Documentaire.

Photo: Jacques Moncomble, courtesy Les Etats Generaux du Documentaire

single street, lined with cafés. The program is organized around a summer university, a professional workshop, and activities aimed at a larger public.

The summer university had two tracks. One provocatively titled "Savage and Indigenous People" brought together panelists including Jean Rouch, a founding father of cinéma vérité, John Marshal, filmmaker and director of the Festival of American Folklife at the Smithsonian, an ONG (Organisation Non Gouvernmentale) called Survival, and myself. The second debate, "Nous Deux," addressed the issue of the relationship of filmmakers to their subjects.

"Nous Deux" included the screening of a very popular French talk show, *Bas les masques* by Mireille Dumas, which brings liberal issues that are rarely spoken about to national television. Film screenings included *Mr. Arkadin* (Orson Welles), *Jacques Lacan* (Benoit Jacquot), *Portrait* (Alain Chevalier), *Let There Be Light* (John Huston), *Undkanal* (Thomas Harlan), and *Notre Nazi* (Robert Kramer). The overall program demonstrated a creative mix of old and contemporary, fiction and documentary.

The professional workshop, which lasted four days, offered film- and videomakers a time for reflection. Jean Marie Barbe, director of Lussas, said, "Here we talk about the auteur dimension of producers, and we speak about artistic issues rather than money." Organized in two stages, the mornings were dedicated to a case study of a certain film, such as *Video Diaries: The Man Who Loves Gary Linker*, part of a BBC video series, and the afternoons provided time for encounters between producers and commissioning editors from Arte, BBC, Canal +, France 2, France 3, RTBF, La Sept-Arte, TV1 Danemark, ZDF, and European institutional funders, including CNC, Documentary, Filmburo, MAP-TV, and Media Desk. Small groups—this year comprised solely of Europeans—worked together in a nearby secluded village. The workshop acquaints producers with important business contacts. It is, to some extent, much more focused than Marseille. Yet both events have a great deal to offer film professionals and enthusiasts.

Sunny Side of the Doc, 3 Square Stalingrad, 13001 Marseille. Tel: (33) 91-908-43-15; fax: (33) 91-84-38-34. Independent producers interested in attending should call Yves Jeanneau, les films d'ici, 12 rue clavel, 75019 Paris, France. Tel: (33 1) 44 52 23 23; fax: (33 1) 44 52 23 24.

ADDOC (filmmaker association), 13 place souham, 75013 Paris. Telephone: (33) 1-44-09-07-30.

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Nathalie Magnan is a freelance journalist and videomaker who teaches at Univertité de Paris 8.

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Monty Ross Takes Control

Spike Lee's Producer Turns to Directing

by Lorna Johnson



Monty Ross is best known for his collaboration with director Spike Lee. To date, he has coproduced seven films with Lee: *She's Gotta Have It*, *School Daze*, *Do the Right Thing*, *Mo' Better Blues*, *Jungle Fever*, *Malcolm X*, and the recently wrapped production *Crooklyn*, due to be theatrically released by Universal Studios in 1994. While continuing his collaboration with Lee, Ross formed his own production company, Simone Nissan Films, in 1988. As a director, he has made a number of high profile commercials and music videos and directed two short films, *1-900-Date Lucy* and *The Dog Is Barking*. In October, Ross began shooting his first feature film, tentatively titled *Misconception*, which is set in Brooklyn and Washington, D.C.

Residing and working in Brooklyn's Fort Greene section, Ross is a familiar face in this community haven for black artists. In the vanguard of the new commercial black cinema, Ross has been instrumental in redefining cinema as a non-elitist art form and bringing filmmaking into the realm of possibility for a generation of black youth. He has also been instrumental in helping a number of young filmmakers in the black community produce and direct their own films. During this conversation, which took place on July 26, 1993, Ross discusses his future projects, his work with Spike Lee, and black filmmaking.

The Independent: Could you talk about the feature project you're about to direct, *Misconception*?

Monty Ross: It's going to be a film about three young, black women over the course of a weekend—how their perceptions of themselves and their boyfriends change. The screenplay is by Juan M. Scott, from Washington, D.C., and most of the characters are from Washington. It's budgeted at $50,000. At present there is no distributor, but we're working on that.

Independent: How has your work as a producer helped you when making your own films? Has it been easier for you to raise money?

Ross: It's easier if I play a certain ball game—meaning, if I'm going to do the movies that people want made. The studios will say, "Sure, we'll give you money, we have films that we want to get made. Would you be interested in producing those?"

They don't necessarily want you to stop doing what they are accustomed to you doing. When they see that you want to do something else, it makes it difficult, because they say, "Well, if it involves major stars, yeah. But if it involves some black folk down in D.C., hell no!" They don't see it like that. They don't see spreading it around to some young black folk who deserve an opportunity.

Independent: It's about the bottom line.

Ross: The bottom line is making some money.

Independent: Do you think it's possible to work within the studio system and come out with your full vision intact?

Ross: If the question is "full" vision, then no, I don't think that's ever possible.

Independent: What do you come out with?

Ross: It depends on your deal and your relationship with the people you're working with. Maybe they'll understand what you're trying to do. You've got to hope that they will, and you've got to negotiate that in your contract.

Independent: It's obviously harder if you're a newer face.

Ross: If you're new, forget about it. Shut up and be happy. There are a only a few people, like Spike and Eddie Murphy, who can get a movie made.

Independent: But that's two out of how many working filmmakers?

Ross: Yeah, two out of 25 million black people.

Independent: We have all kinds of people in our community.

Ross: But it's, "No, you cannot come in this house. You cannot come in our kitchen and cook. Only two of y'all can. You have to prove that this is going to be a blockbuster."

Independent: That's still the climate for black filmmakers?

Ross: It's that climate and more.

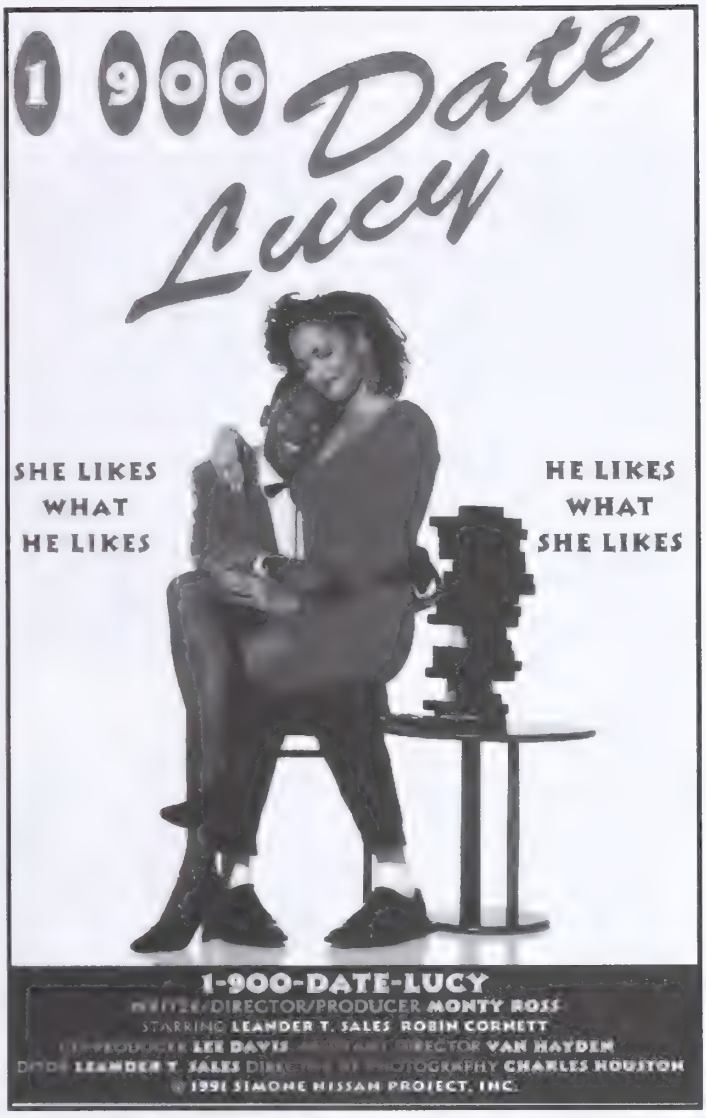
Independent: So what can you do?

Ross: You can do a lot—absolutely, positively do a lot.

I remember in 1979 I was hanging out. I got into the theater and began to discover that you've got to have money. Alright, where do you get the money? You go to the city. The city has grants, the state has grants, and there's the National Endowment for the Arts, so you go there. What I'm saying is, I found out who was on the Boards of Directors. I found out who dictated the policies, and I went to the cocktail parties they were having and

Monty Ross, who formed his own production company, Simone Nissan Films, in 1988, began shooting his first feature in October of this year.

Courtesy Simone Nissan Films



Ross' announcement for his 1991 short, *1-900-Date Lucy*, about a man who calls a 900 number in search of a girlfriend.

Courtesy Simone Nissan Films

began to introduce myself. I said, "Here are some ideas. What do you think?" And if they said, "See me Monday morning," I would see them Monday morning. If they said, "Fill out this grant application," we'd do that. And we put together a program in Atlanta called The Young Filmmakers, where we taught 20 young people for two summers about making their own films. They used an 8mm camera, and we did two short films that the students wrote, directed, and produced themselves.

Independent: Who's "we?"

Ross: Basically an ad-hoc group of four or five young brothers in Atlanta. We pulled together, and the program worked. We only disbanded because everybody wanted to do their own thing. After that I began working with Spike. But, again, you know *She's Gotta Have It* came about because there was a grant from the New York State Council on the Arts.

So what I'm saying is you don't have to show a movie in a movie theater. You can show a movie in an auditorium, you can show a movie in church. I believe that. If you're really interested in creating your own cinema, do it!

Independent: With the Spike phenomenon, you have a generation of youth all wanting to be directors, as opposed to exploring the other options, such as marketing or distribution. Nobody wants to think about owning the theaters or being the Spike Lee of distribution.

Ross: When you're on the cover of a magazine like *Premiere*, and you've got the big studios, and you got the big ol' car, you want that lifestyle. But to do this thing right, it's got to be a mentality that switches from all that crazy stuff.

I grew up in theater. In theater you launch a play, you raise the money, and you hope people come out and look at it. That means you've got to take the bull by the horns and say, "Look, we've got this raggedy old theater. Y'all need to come see the plays." And we got my uncle from down the street—him and his boys. They're coming in here with the wood, the hammer, the saws.

I'm saying it doesn't take all of that for somebody to project a film. It doesn't take all of that for somebody to stand at the theater entrance to take the money. Shoot, we can make popcorn. Get one of them big machines and cook the popcorn and do it. Except there's no glamour in that. *Entertainment Tonight* is not going to come and say, "We're here at the opening at the Unity Theater."

Independent: So forget about the pomp and circumstance.

Ross: I'm one of those people who asks, "What do you want to do? You want to make some films, man? Let's go." Because my life had been that anyway.

It's a funny story: Bill Nunn [who played Radio Raheem in *Do the Right Thing*] and I used to really hang tight in Atlanta. This is before *School Daze*. I said, "I'm going to New York to do these films." So every summer we would come here, and we would fail. Just plain out. This went on for two years. When I came back to Atlanta, I'd go over to his house we would sit down with a six-pack of beer and I would tell him about the funny things that went on in New York. He'd say "Ah man, you've got to *do* something. We've got to get ours."

I said, "Bill, you've got to take my paper route." I had a *New York Times* paper route—about 25 papers in downtown Atlanta. It was like $125 a week. When I was doing *She's Gotta Have It*, Bill Nunn was doing that paper route.

You know, we were trying to make it. This was my schedule: I would do a children's show in the morning with the Atlanta Street Theater, do another children's show in the afternoon, leave that, go audition for a resident theater thing, leave that, go do my paper route, go home, get some sleep, and start all over again. There were plenty of times when I said, "Okay, I'm going to get a regular job," but it didn't fit. These are the kinds of experiences that made me and Bill Nunn. He said, "I'm thankful I had that paper route. I could think. I could go out early in the morning, smoke a cigarette, deliver these papers. And I was thinking, 'This is quiet time.' Quiet time when I don't have to think about the kids. I could just be myself." And he said, " I want to thank you for that." And I was like *damn*. And nobody really knows those kinds of things about how we all got it started.

Independent: How did you get involved in film? Was it something premeditated? Did you want to be a producer?

Ross: I started in 1975 as an actor at Clark Atlanta University studying under Joan Lewis. My classmates were Bill Nunn and Sam Jackson, who have starred in Spike's later films.

We were all working doing various things in theater. We always had to do two things: the Show and the Business. The Business meant that, as students, you learned how to pull a show together—what goes on behind the scenes, as well as what goes on in front. The school also started a film program around that time. No one really knew how to work the camera. The



Ross (left) and Lee at an early moment of triumph. The sign reads, "*She's Gotta*: 9:45 show sold out."

Courtesy Simone Nissan Films



Tracy Camila Johns as Nola Darling in *She's Gotta Have It*, the first of eight features by Spike Lee that Ross produced.

Courtesy Island Pictures

drama students hung out with the film majors, and they would make film shorts. There were a lot of interesting things going on at the time. It was all about expression and opening up.

And so I met Spike through a mutual friend; he was in the mass communications department at Clark Atlanta University. Since then, I have worked with him primarily as a filmmaker. He and I worked together, hung out in college together, and from college into the real world. Later when Spike finished his thesis film, *We Cut Heads: Joe's Bed Stuy Barbershop...*

Independent: That was at New York University's graduate film school, right?



Ross: Right. I acted in that film [playing the lead, Zake Homer] and was the production assistant. Then from there we segued into other films. Finally *She's Gotta Have It* was the one where everybody recognized the talent. After that we did *School Daze*. Most people know the history after that.

Independent: It seems you've kept a low public profile as far as interviews go. Is it something that you've done intentionally and, if so, why?

Ross: When people read interviews, they start expecting more of you. They expect you to get $2 million to make "their" film. There are high expectations because not that many black folks can get a film made, so when they hear of somebody who can, it's like manna from heaven. So I try to be very selective, very focused, and just enjoy the work. Every once in a while I may let someone stick a microphone in my face. I want to be a working producer type.

Independent: What do you think of the wave of black films that came out in the last year-and-a-half?

Ross: I think we have tried to make a number of different [kinds of] films. Bill Duke has made a number of different films. So has Spike, Julie Dash. The respect we don't get is simply because the industry says these films didn't make a whole lot of money. But, see, most of *their* films don't make a whole lot of money. It's only a few films that really do great business. But they're figuring, "Well, we'd rather take our chances on showing a movie to everybody than just a few people. With you blacks, it's just a few people, even though there's a lot of black people in the theater but there's no white people in the theater to balance out the overall gross."

"We need some really strong pioneers to make low-budget films, the kind we can just identify with, that don't necessarily have a whole lot of special effects. Just good strong stories."

Ross (in background) on the set with Spike Lee.

Courtesy Simone Nissan Films

Independent: Why do you think there is a tendency to produce one type of black film in Hollywood—the urban B-Boy film?

Ross: That's their agenda right now. I don't think that there is a tremendous need to provide a cross-section of culture to the black community. The film industry just is like that.

The film industry is a world that you can create. And if you can begin to create a world that shows black people can be smart, can be all the things that we know we are, I feel there is a fear in that—because you change buying patterns. All of a sudden you say, "I'm somebody. I saw this movie, and the movie said, 'Hey, this is how you invest in Wall Street.'" The overwhelming fear is that.

Independent: What kind of films do you want to make ultimately?

Ross: I want to make films that are entertaining and thought provoking, films that won't be dictated according to Hollywood standards. We need some really strong pioneers to make low-budget films, the kind we can just identify with, that don't necessarily have to have a whole lot of special effects or a whole lot of this or that. Just good strong stories.

Independent: What kind of control do you want to have over your films?

Ross: Balanced control. I don't necessarily have to employ a big crew and have a lot of things going on in order to be a filmmaker. A lot of people want the 10-million campers and trailers and things like that. And sometimes shooting in New York, you can't help it because of the union situation. But I honestly think there is a future in cinema where you make good quality films, where you'll develop an audience, and people will look at your movies in places like the Angelika Film Center.

You get into Hollywood and, in a sense, you have to be careful; it's lonely at the top. After being out there for so long, I can see that you get tied in. They want you to make the films they want you to make, and they pay you lots of money to do that. But you may not be able to make those kinds of films. And then, what do you do? Your career is shot because your reputation is gone. So you always have to figure out how much money it takes for you to survive and be true to the art.

Independent: Be true to yourself. Is it enough for you to be a director?

Ross: Probably not. I mean I'm only interested in directing about two or three films, because I'm not really interested in it as a permanent thing. I'm really gearing up toward the next thing, which is teaching and really being involved in pushing the industry forward for black folk, as opposed to always listening to "Here's my script; what can you do for me?"

Independent: What would you tell future filmmakers to focus on?

Ross: The whole art of how to tell a story with as little money as possible: What can you do to tell a feature-length movie for as little money as possible? What can we really put together? How much money does it take to break even after we've made it? Who's coming to see it? How can we realistically set something up?

It's hard to get away from big Hollywood because Hollywood is so powerful when it comes to advertising. You want to see *Jurassic Park*.

Independent: Even though you know it's bad.

Ross: You want to see *Last Action Hero* because they've got the power to create an advertising campaign to make you want to see it, even though it may not suit your taste. You say, "I ain't got nothing to do. Let's go to the movies."



Bill Nunn, pictured here as Radio Raheem in *Do the Right Thing*, took over Ross' paper route in Atlanta when Ross went off to produce *She's Gotta Have It*.

Courtesy Universal City Studios.

Independent: Are you going to make *Misconception* independently?

Ross: Yes, it'll be independent.

Independent: What other films have you done or do you want to do?

Ross: Simple things. I made one short film about a guy who's looking to have a girlfriend. He calls a 900 number. He still doesn't get the girl, but he learns a lesson along the way. Another film is about a kid who wants an expensive pair of sneakers but settles for a cheap pair. And *Misconception* is about three



Courtesy Simone Nissan Films

young women who want to go out and enjoy the weekend without having their boyfriends around them: a) There's internal conflict within themselves around this; b) It deals with the way in 1993 young brothers deal with women. It's usually a ball and chain kind of situation.

So those are the simple kind of films. I'm not trying to make films for which you need a whole lot of money to get them made. I just honestly believe in films that have one or two people in them.

Independent: What are some of the films and filmmakers that have helped shaped your vision?

Ross: I like films like *Midnight Cowboy*, the original *Breathless*, *D.O.A.* I like Spike, Martin Scorsese, some of Spielberg's early works. He made this film called *1941* with John Belushi, about a World War II airplane pilot. I like Lucas' early work. He made this film called *THX-1138* starring Robert Duvall. It's this futuristic society where everything is done for you. I like *Heart of Darkness: Apocalypse Now*. I've learned more about storytelling from foreign filmmakers. I watched Truffaut's *400 Blows* last night, and I'm watching this Fellini film, and I'm learning about storytelling.

Independent: How has theater shaped your perspective?

Ross: Theater gives you a perspective on everything: lighting, sound design, blocking, acting, pulling from the depths and communicating with an audience night after night. You can do a lot of interesting things; you can be completely experimental, completely avant garde, and not be worried about where the camera is going to go. So you have a tendency to be freer, and you can make mistakes. In film, you make mistakes, and that shit is expensive. You don't eat again. People look at you like, "You dropped a roll of film. It's exposed! Get outta here."

Independent: Do you think the artist has a responsibility to his or her community? Do you think we have to be accountable—the way a section of community wanted you to be accountable to them for *Malcolm X*?

Ross: Artists have a responsibility first to themselves, to become good filmmakers. You have to tell the stories you want to tell. Essex Hemphill is gay, and he tells stories of the black gay male experience. He has the right to have his vision intact. The filmmaker has a responsibility first to himself. Because you know, if you don't do what people say, they hate you. And you can spend a whole lifetime trying to get people to like you. You gotta sing your music, write your plays; you've gotta do everything that you want. Because when they start saying, "Ah, we don't like your stuff no more," they go to somebody else.

Independent: Would you say that most people of color still do not have equal access to funding or equipment?

Ross: That's not necessarily true now. We need to stop that. We need to stop all that. In 1979, when I got started, there wasn't a whole bunch of money. What I'm saying is, "What's in your hands?" You've got to tailor-make your film according to what you have. If you believe in what you're doing, you're going to price it out. You'll sit down and price it out. You say, "Okay, if we shoot one week. If we do this, if we do that. Maybe if my mother cooked. Maybe if my daddy drove the truck." You've got to be thinking like that. That's how you get things moving forward.

Independent: What's next on your agenda?

Ross: I'm helping to develop a Film Program at Clark Atlanta University. Our overall goal will be to graduate top quality filmmakers who are to shoot their own films, as well as produce them. I'm also a consultant to the Fulton County Film Commission. Moreover, I'm continuing my work here with Spike, and primarily I'm focused on pulling this all together. I see myself continuing to make films and continuing to do the things I've always done.

Lorna Johnson is a freelance writer and has worked in media distribution and programming for the past five years. She recently cofounded with Reginald Woolery the marketing and promotion firm Third Eye Media, designed to assist filmmakers of color.



German Coproduction: A Mixed Blessing for Sara Driver and Beth B.

by Bérénice Reynaud

At the recent Locarno Film Festival and Toronto Festival of Festivals, one could rediscover two directors who first attracted attention in New York during the late seventies and early eighties, then disappeared from the feature filmmaking scene for the last six to seven years: Beth B. and Sara Driver. Both women have reemerged with provocative feature films; interestingly, both secured funding through foreign sources (German for B., a combination of German and Japanese money for Driver) and consequently had to shoot their films in Germany. What does that say about the prospect of raising money for independent projects in the U.S.? Is Europe the new mecca for independent filmmakers? As the experience of these two directors with German coproduction makes clear, there are positive and negative sides to foreign financing.

Driver, also known as the producer of Jim Jarmusch's *Stranger than Paradise* (1984) and his video of Tom Waits' *It's All Right with Me* (1992), has, as a director, always worked on the subtle relationship between the visible and the invisible. *You Are Not I* (1983), a 40-minute featurette shot in black and white, embraced the point-of-view of an emotionally disturbed woman who resorts to secret "magic" to get rid of her sister. In Driver's first feature, *Sleepwalk* (1986), a fantastic atmosphere from a Chinese manuscript slowly invades the dark streets of downtown Manhattan, deeply affecting the life of a young woman. With her recently completed feature *When Pigs Fly*, Driver takes us into a gloomy Irish American neighborhood and among the staff and customers of a seedy bar called the Rose of Erin. It is a story in which the dead awaken the living, bringing to light a forgotten murder committed by the bar owner (Seymour Cassel) and forcing an unsuccessful and embittered jazz musician (Alfred Molina) to finally face life, and to deal with a go-go dancer (Maggie O'Neil) who has a crush on him. It is a ghost story (Marianne Faithful, as the elder phantom, is delightful in a part written especially for her), which shouldn't surprise us, since the film was shot in Wiesmar, East Germany, the city in which, in F.W. Murnau's 1922 silent film *Nosferatu*, phantoms came to meet the unfortunate Jonathan on a broken bridge.

Coming out of a visual arts background, Beth B. was a major exponent of the super 8 "New Wave" movement that grew in downtown Manhattan in the late seventies. With her then-husband Scott B. she codirected a number of cheaply made cult movies, including the famous serial *The Offenders* (1979), in which all the roles were filled by stars of the punk music scene. She then completed a 16mm feature, *Vortex* (1983), an icy parable about power, greed, and sex, which was later shown at the New York Film Festival. Then came a number of music videos, including *The Dominatrix Sleeps Tonight*, and the feature film *Salvation!* (1987) about a televangelist. Recently, B. made several videos, including *Belladonna* (1989), *Thanatopsis* (1991), and *Stigmata* (1991) in collaboration with her mother, visual artist Ida Applebroog, before returning to feature filmmaking with *Two Small Bodies* (1993). The film is a fascinating, cruel "no exit" drama between a divorcee of "dubious morality" (Suzy Amis) and a cop (Fred Ward), who tries to make her confess to the murder of her children.

Two Small Bodies is based on a play written by Neal Bell in the late seventies. According to Beth B., "Because it involves two characters and one location, nobody in Hollywood wanted to read it." So she sent her adaptation to various European sources of financing and eventually got an extremely positive reply from Brigitte Kramer, who involved the television stations ZDF and Arte in Germany. However, the contract stipulated that B. shoot the entire film in Germany and get a German producer.

In the seventies, ZDF used to fund a significant number of U.S. independent projects, but this source of financing subsequently dried out. (It seems that German funders had underestimated the difficulties encountered by U.S. independents in securing additional monies for their films and became weary when the projects took "too long" to complete.) The requirement to have a German producer is part of a new funding policy, designed to provide the TV station with a certain degree of control over the timetable and insure that it will get its quotient of programs "on time."

Driver had been unsuccessfully trying to raise money for an adaptation of Jane Bowles' *Two Serious Ladies*. "I had to blow the pressure valve, so

Left: Suzy Amis playing a divorcee of dubious morality in *Two Small Bodies*. Below: Rachael Bella and Alfred Molina on the set of Sara Driver's feature *When Pigs Fly*.

Courtesy Sultan Driver Films





In Beth B.'s *Two Small Bodies*, a divorced mother of two (Suzy Amis) becomes entangled with a police officer (Fred Ward) who tries to get her to confess to the murder of her children

Courtesy Beth B.

I went ahead and started *When Pigs Fly*, even though I still want to pursue the Bowles project," she says. She opened her own production office in New York City, and her partner, Susan Sultan, brought to the table a Japanese company, NDF (which produced *Naked Lunch, Howard's End*, and *The Crying Game*), as well as a German company, Pandora. But Japanese financing was contingent on letters of credit that Driver's company was unable to secure. At this point Dutch producer Kees Kasander got involved in the project and, through the services of his lawyers and financial advisers, was able to get *When Pigs Fly* off the ground. However, Driver describes her relationship with Kasander as "difficult" and says they have not spoken since last March. One of the problems was communication: "There were four different companies involved, all in different time zones," the director explains.

The stipulation to shoot the entire film in Germany came when the project was awarded money from the Hamburg Film Fund, bringing the German involvement to a total of 60 percent. "It means that you have to spend 150 percent of the money they give you in Hamburg," says Driver. She had hoped until one week before preproduction to be able to shoot the exteriors in the U.S., where the film is set. When it proved impossible, she "fought like hell" to shoot the exteriors in Wiesmar, where she was able to recreate the atmosphere of a Massachusetts waterfront. The interiors were all shot in Hamburg. "The West Germans are not very fond of East Germans and didn't want to go there," Driver recalls. "It would have been financially better to do the entire shooting in Wiesmar, but I wasn't allowed to do that."

Both women speak highly of their German crews, even though B. found it difficult to work with a limited number of people. "Because we had such a small budget, we only had a crew of 15—one gaffer, no electrician, one grip.... The only person I brought from the U.S. was the DP, Fred Parmet, who had shot Barbara Kopple's *American Dream* and Alexandre Rockwell's *In the Soup*. But I was shooting a lot of long takes, which is difficult when you're working with a small crew." Driver, who had a crew of 20, was able to bring seven of her "core family" from New York (including DP Robbie Müller and AD Christopher Porter), but her real difficulties during the shoot came from the production office, which she didn't find very supportive: "Since the money was coming from all these different places, sometimes accounting became messy, and, having worked as a line producer, I didn't understand certain choices that were being made, she says."

A new set of problems arose with postproduction. "They didn't have the facilities I needed," says Driver. "For me the sound is 50 percent of the movie. I work very carefully on it, and there was no sound library. They also told me I had to mix on a video screen. I said, 'This is a motion picture, not a television show.'" So, thanks to the intervention of Demetra McBride, Jim Jarmusch's partner, Driver was able to go back to New York to complete her entire postproduction.

B., however, had to stay in Germany due to budget restrictions. "I couldn't even find an 8-plate in Frankfurt and had to edit on a 6-plate, which makes it difficult to work on the soundtrack. And I had to do the mix in a studio that was designed for television; they didn't even have an automated board. Because I had to mix on a video screen, I couldn't really see the lips of my actors to see whether or not we were in sync." B. continues, "I think that the film is spectacular, but the sound needs to be re-mixed. When you work with just two people on a set, you need a certain depth of the sound, a certain atmosphere to create some subliminal messages, which was impossible in the facilities we had. Also, in Germany they do the sound in 17mm, which is of lesser quality than the 35mm you work with in the U.S. And the picture editor is the same person as the sound editor. That aspect of the postproduction was extremely frustrating."

B. also found that working with German producers is a double-edged sword because they don't think in terms of theatrical release. "My German producer, Daniel Zuta, was very supportive, but he's used to working in terms of a package between television and government subsidies. There is no incentive to organize the theatrical release of the film." Completed in July, *Two Small Bodies* was immediately broadcast during the summer by Arte in France (in a dubbed version that was not supervised by B.), but ZDF agreed to wait before broadcasting the film in Germany, giving B.'s film time for a theatrical window. "The advice I'd give to someone in my position," offers B., "would be: one, to have an American coproducer; two, to sort out all the stipulations of the contract from the onset, such as

"When I was trying to raise money for Two Serious Ladies," *says Driver, "everybody kept asking who the male lead was. I said the title of the script is* Two Serious *Ladies."*



Director Sara Driver was able to bring over seven of her "core family" of crew members from New York, including (from left) 1st AD Todd Pfeiffer and DP Robby Müller, for her Hamburg-based production of *When Pigs Fly*.

Courtesy Sultan Driver Films



Rachel Bella as Ruthie and Marianne Faithful as Lilly in *When Pigs Fly*.

Courtesy Sultan Driver Films

copyright control, bankruptcy clauses, negative ownership, financial and artistic control; and three, to insist that all postproduction be done in the U.S. However," she adds, "without Arte and ZDF, the film would never have been made."

Why couldn't the films be funded in the U.S.? Driver finds that "in the U.S., people will only give you money if you accept their casting ideas and give them final cut. And I wouldn't even bother making a film if I didn't have final cut. For *When Pigs Fly*, I was given complete creative control, and I owe that freedom to the European and Japanese financiers, because they have more respect for the *auteur*." For B., "It has a lot to do with subject matter. I am not interested in Hollywood escapist, feel-good movies, but in dangerous, edgy films that are uncomfortable and disturbing, with characters that you may not necessarily like, but who are interesting to listen to. I'm interested in films that take you on a journey that continues after you leave the theater." In B.'s view, the range of possibilities offered by American cinema, once open to mavericks such as Sam Fuller or John Cassavetes, has closed up in the last few years, while European cinema is more open to this direction.

Both B. and Driver adamantly refuse to be "ghettoized" as "female filmmakers," but acknowledge that certain forms of gender bias played a role in their difficulties in securing funding. "When I was trying to raise money for *Two Serious Ladies*," says Driver, "everybody kept asking who the male lead was. I said the title of the script is *Two Serious Ladies*. There were two strong, well-known actresses who wanted to be in the film, but I still couldn't find the money." B. says, "Yesterday somebody asked me why I couldn't get financing in the U.S. and I replied, 'Do they trust women with money in this business?'" She adds, "I don't think *Two Small Bodies* could fit in the Hollywood system of production. For me, it's a very personal story. In the sixties, women tried to battle against their traditional roles, to refuse the contradiction between career and motherhood. I saw my mother go through a nervous breakdown and leave the family, find herself, and become an artist. I kept seeing my mother in Eileen, the protagonist of *Two Small Bodies*. She is distressed, disturbed; she can't react to her children's disappearance because she is in a process of mental breakdown."

For Sara Driver and Beth B., getting overseas funding and shooting abroad has become part of a survival strategy as filmmakers and artists who want to keep their vision intact, rather than crank out films to satisfy a hypothetical market. "I want to make films when I have a story to tell, when I need to purge myself of something which strikes so hard that I have to throw it out visually," says Driver, who adds that her main ambition, for the time being, is to "keep [her] tiny office open." But she's also thinking about opening a bookstore in New York. For B., the road to freedom has been opened by work in the art world. She has been commissioned by various museums to do sculptural installations involving video, audio, and painting. "It's the *idea* that is important to me, not just knocking out a film," she says. "I choose difficult projects." B. is currently shooting *Vision of Excess*, an adaptation of short stories by women from different countries and dealing with "perverse sexuality."

Bérénice Reynaud writes for Cahiers du Cinéma, Libération, Sight and Sound, *and* Cinemaya, *among other magazines. An independent film/video curator and correspondent for several European film festivals, she is currently teaching at the California Institute of the Arts.*

ON THE RIGHT TRACK

Getting the Most from a Sound Studio

JACOB BURCKHARDT

The sound track mix is arguably the last major creative event in producing a film. Here, all the elements that will comprise the audio portion of the movie, whatever their sources, are combined and balanced, seamlessly and apparently effortlessly. It is usually the first time that the filmmaker and even the sound editor can hear how all their tracks work together and, chances are, the results will never sound better (considering that the next time they hear it will be through the medium of an optical track or a little TV speaker).



Had this scene been from a studio feature, 50 or more audio tracks might have been used. But *Jazz Summit*, Jacki Ochs' documentary on the Ganelin Trio, Russia's foremost avant-garde jazz group, kept it clean and simple: one track for voice, another for ambient sound, and two for music.

Courtesy filmmaker

For a small production it is also a time of great tension. The filmmaker is often under a deadline, running out of money, daunted by the hourly rate, and haunted by many earlier "we'll-fix-it-in-the-mix" decisions. It can also be quite exciting—all these little bits of picture and mag that you have been struggling with for months, or even years, suddenly come to life and start to look and sound like *a movie*.

What follows is a short description of a traditional analog film mixing studio. Although digital and tapeless systems are constantly becoming more flexible and sophisticated, at this time, editing and mixing on film still seems to be the most versatile and affordable way. A major reason is that to store the sound of all but the shortest movies for manipulation on a digital system, you need large amounts of hard disk storage—about five megabytes per track minute.

From a re-recording mixer's point of view, there are several things conducive to a good mix, namely well-organized and physically clean and undamaged tracks; well laid out and legible cue sheets; a slop print or an answer print with no splices; a producer who knows what he or she wants and has a good awareness of the audio possibilities; and a comfortable amount of time. There should also be a minimum number of people present in the sound studio making decisions—preferably just the sound editor and the director (the composers are rarely welcome because they usually want the music too loud). Most often the mixer is not involved in setting the hourly rate, but you should consult with him about the time needed. You would also do well to book an interlock session (at a reduced rate) some time before a mix. Here you will bring in all the tracks, the picture, and the cue sheets, if possible, and run them all together from beginning to end with the mixer, so you can hear things that you may not have noticed on a low-fidelity editing table, and the mixer can get an idea of what he's in for and make recommendations. You should give yourself adequate time to make corrections between the interlock and the actual mix.

The mixing studio consists of two rooms. In the back is the machine room or projection room. It contains the playback dubbers, of which there can be any number from three on up, usually convertible to either 35mm or 16mm. This number determines the maximum number of tracks or loops that can be mixed at one time (and you'd better know what that number is *before* you bring your elements in). This room also contains the pickup or master recorder that the mix is recorded onto, and it is also usually convertible from 16mm to 35mm, with provisions for one, three, four, or six tracks. A pickup recorder means that you can seamlessly punch into record as the machine is rolling with no audible clicks or dropouts. Then there is the projector, a 16mm or 35mm unit that is specially modified to run in interlock with any or all of the previously mentioned units. Since during most mixes the projector is made to run backwards and forwards many times, often over the same piece of film, it is almost certain to hang up on some workprint splices and lose registration (and sometimes even break the film), which is annoying at best. This is why it's advisable, especially in 16mm, to strike a low-cost, black-and-

white slop print from the work print before the mix. Most studios nowadays have the capability of locking a video version of the picture with the tracks (make sure you have the right kind of time code!). You can bring in loops, preferably six to 10 feet long, but they are unpopular as they tend to wear out and break and need constant watching. A technician is stationed in the machine room, whose job is to thread and rewind the machines and keep an eye on them (especially the projector) as the mix progresses. He can also move individual tracks around if there is a sync problem.

You should make sure that all your tracks are in perfect sync with the picture before you get to the mix, as these types of problems can eat up a lot of time. Usually, when something looks out of sync, an experienced mixer or sound editor can guess the necessary correction, but it is still a matter of stopping, moving the track in question, and checking it. A splice in the picture can always knock the projector loop off a couple of frames, and then everything will look out of sync even though it isn't. In most studios the picture will be retarded (two frames when you're recording on 35mm, five for 16mm) so that the picture will be in sync with the playback head on the master recorder (as opposed to the record head).

The studio proper is a much larger room, separated from the machine room by a soundproof double pane of glass. At the far end is the screen and the speaker(s). There may also be a video monitor or projector. Below the screen is the footage counter, which tells the mixer where to look on your cue sheets. In most studios the counts are in 35mm feet, no matter what your film is. This means that if your film is in 16mm, you must convert all your footage by multiplying it by 2.5 when making up your cue sheets.

Between the screen and the mixing board might be some comfortable chairs, where the director and his or her entourage can sit. Sometimes these chairs are located behind the mixer's station so they can look over his or her shoulder.

Behind the mixing board sits the re-recording mixer and next to him or her, if he/she is lucky, the film's sound editor, who can help interpret the cue sheets. To one side will be a rack of outboard equipment. Each playback dubber goes to a different channel on the board. It usually has a channel fader, some equalization, and switches for assigning the channel to a "bus" or track on the master recorder.

Depending on the layout of the edited tracks and the number of channels on the master recorder, dialogue and voiceovers are usually recorded on the first track or two, music on the next track, effects on the following one or two tracks. One track is usually kept available for room tones, loops, or emergencies. By keeping the tracks separate, the mixer can work with, for example, the music without disturbing what he has done already on dialogue and effects. For this reason, a mixer will prefer to mix onto multi-track 35mm. for any but the simplest two or three track mixes.

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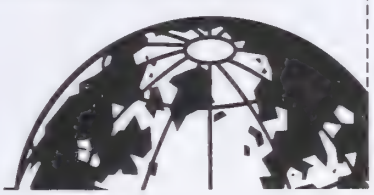
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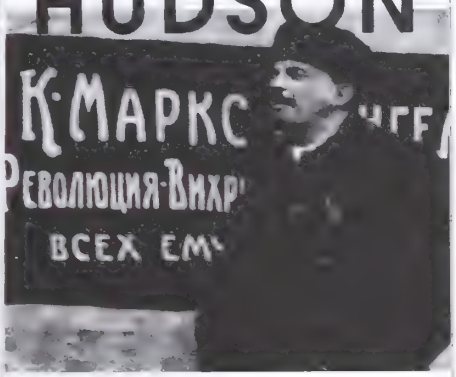
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(An optical can be made just as easily from 35 full coat as from 16mm.) Also, separating dialogue from the other elements makes it easier to prepare an M & E (music and effects only) track for dubbing in foreign languages.

The outboard rack contains a variety of equipment that can be inserted via the patch bay either in a particular channel or a bus. It usually includes: reverb units, which can be used for weird effects, to smooth over music edits, or to blend replacement sounds with location sounds by simulating the reflective qualities of the location (incidentally, it is best to keep your tracks as dry, or free of reverb, as possible before the mix, because the context of the other sounds makes a big difference, and you can't take out reverb once it's there); compressor/limiters; parametric equalizers and/or notch filters; noise gates (the latter two can be very effective in cleaning up unwanted camera or background noise); and more sophisticated units for cleaning, sweetening, and modifying sound like the Dolby cat. 43a, Pultec, and Lexicon LXP-15. There is also usually some kind of sampler or tape deck that can be used to roll in effects or room tones when you suddenly find that you are missing a sound at the last moment. Most studios have loops or rolls of commonly used backgrounds such as city traffic, birds chirping, or white noise, which can be used as room tone. There will also be a small soundproof voiceover booth with a microphone where you can foley an effect or dub a line at the last moment.

The mixer might tend to give the mix less dynamic range (difference between the loud parts and soft parts) than you might like, but that is because he is more aware of the limited range of the optical in the final print (especially in 16mm). Mixers tend to be cautious with dialogue, in the sense that they might play it much louder than the other tracks. This is where you have to voice your opinion. Also, in the heat of the action, it is possible to miss laying down a minor effect—that is where the filmmaker or sound editor has to remind him. Lastly, you should be sure to schedule enough time to check the mix after it is done. Even though you are listening to the mix playback as you go along, it is always possible to miss small errors and inconsistencies, and it is always best to hear the track as the audience would hear it, with all the sounds in their proper context. If all the tracks are running, it is a simple matter to make corrections as you go.

A good mixer can work quickly with his equipment, but everything takes time. If an inadequate amount of time has been scheduled, sacrifices have to be made, and you will remember them every time you see and hear your picture.

Jacob Burckhardt is a re-recording mixer at Ross-Gaffney, Inc. He has also directed and sound-edited two independent features, Landlord Blues *and* It Don't Pay To Be an Honest Citizen.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

BY JASON LOWI

Film Criticism & Theory

A Critical Cinema 2: Interviews with Independent Filmmakers

by Scott MacDonald

University of California Press, Berkeley, $17.00

Scott MacDonald continues his search for the independent sensibility in his second volume of interviews with accomplished independent filmmakers, ranging from Robert Breer and Su Friedrich to Laura Mulvey and Ross MacElwee.

The Cinematic Body

by Steven Shaviro

University of Minnesota Press, $18.95

A radical critique of existing and accepted models of film theory and an attempt to reevaluate the film art with respect to a desensitized and ambivalent contemporary culture.

Sex, Sin and Blasphemy: A Guide To America's Censorship Wars

by Marjorie Heins

The New Press, $11.95

Marjorie Heins takes a comprehensive look at censorship trends on various battlefields, from suburban neighborhoods to the halls of government.

Ecstasy Unlimited: On Sex, Capital, Gender, and Aesthetics

by Laura Kipnis

University of Minnesota Press, $49.95 cloth; $18.95 paper

A pastiche of perspective and representation; Kipnis combines a collection of essays on popular culture, aesthetics, and feminism with three complete videoscripts.

Dirty Looks: Women, Pornography, Power

Edited by Pamela Church Gibson and Roma Gibson

BFI Publishing and Indiana University Press, $18.95

The collection of essays examines the boundaries between pornography and art and explores the socially empowering possibilities of deviance and the pornographic imagination.

Male Trouble

Edited by Constance Penley and Sharon Willis

University of Minnesota Press, $16.95

Penley and Willis have compiled a variety of essays concerning the troubled concept of "masculinity." Under the systematic theoretical pressures of feminism, gay politics, and the AIDS epidemic, the authors attempt to reconcile a fractured image of man.

Gender and German Cinema: Feminist Interventions

Edited by Sandra Frieden, Richard W. McCormick, Vibeke R. Petersen, Laurie Melissa Vogelsang.

Berg Publishers, Volume 1: $19.95, Volume 2: $19.95

A broad historical reading of German Cinema through the category of gender. Contributors examine narrative discourse, cinematic techniques, production and the politics of representation from a variety of feminist approaches.

Cinema and Spectatorship

by Judith Mayne

Routledge, Chapman and Hall, $16.95

Mayne's analysis of the role of the spectator in contemporary film studies. Issues include: the draw of cult films, the significance of genre, fantasies of race, and the gay/lesbian perspective as critical audience.

The Bronze Screen: Chicana and Chicano Film Culture

by Rosa Linda Fregoso

University of Minnesota Press, $15.95

From its basis as a historical conflict arising between the "first" (U.S.) and "third" (Mexico) worlds, Chicano perspectives on film and film history are explored through the articulation and exposition of alternative narrative codes that make up a Chicano film language.

Chicanos and Film: Representation and Resistance

Edited by A. Noreiga

University of Minnesota Press, $19.95

An expansive compilation of essays that work to open a discourse between film criticism and the the study of Mexican American culture.

Recycled Images

by William Wees

Anthology Film Archives, $10

William Wees explores the expressive potential as well as the political, aesthetic, and artistic implications of using found footage and archived material in the creation of a new film form.

Images of the South: Constructing a Regional Culture on Film and Video

Edited by Karl G. Heider

University of Georgia Press, $16

Still photographs, television news footage, student videos, documentaries, and feature films comprise a window through which to view ourselves and our culture. Heider has compiled essays in an attempt to represent a regional identity.

Gay Hollywood Film & Video Guide: Over 75 Years of Male Homosexuality in the Movies

by Steve Stewart

Companion Publications, $15.95

This 300-page video guide lists films from *Paris Is Burning* to *A Chorus Line*, providing ratings, descriptive blurbs, and trivia about works with major or minor gay characters or themes.

Mass Media

Adventures in Medialand: Behind the News, Beyond the Pundits

by Jeff Cohen and Norman Soloman

Common Courage Press, $11.95

A collection of essays and anecdotes that reflect on the methods and madness surrounding the news media. Together the authors take issue with such diverse issues as political coverage, "reliable sources," and media hypocrisy on political correctness. They also evaluate specific cases, such as Spike Lee and *Malcolm X*, nuclear testing, and Dan Quayle.

Channels of Resistance: Global Television and Local Empowerment

Edited by Tony Dowmunt

BFI/Indiana Univ. Press, $22.95; $52.95 cloth

Essays detailing the expressive potential for difference, diversity, and radical innovation in the world of television, with case studies from independently produced indigenous TV in Brazil to alternative Aboriginal networks in Australia.

Ruthless Criticism: New Perspectives in U.S. Communication History

Edited by William Soloman and Robert McChesney

University of Minnesota Press, $16.95

A series of essays detailing the profound contradictions of a profit-driven, privately owned media system and the possibility for truth.

Quality Time?

The Report of the Twentieth Century Fund Task Force on Public Television.

The Twentieth Century Fund, $9.95

A comprehensive report and assessment of the future of public television, including a discussion on the history, cost and financing, new technologies, public policy considerations, and its future amid the wasteland of commercial television.

Production/Practical Texts

I Wake Up Screening: Everything You Need to Know About Making Independent Films Including a Thousand Reasons Not To

by Frank D. Gilroy

Southern Illinois University Press, $39.95

A compilation of daily film logs, production notes, and stories that address the personal, practical, pragmatic, and ephemeral questions of independent filmmaking.

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The Independent Film and Video Monthly wants to hear about new Bay Area films and videos for our regional spotlight in the March issue. Information on recent releases and works-in-progress will be included (as space permits) in the "In and Out of Production" column. Priority given to members of the Association of Independent Video and Filmmakers. Send descriptions & photos by Jan. 4 to: In & Out, *The Independent*, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., NY, NY 10012.

Publications on Distribution Now Available from AIVF Publications

The Next Step: Distributing Independent Films and Videos

Edited by Morrie Warshawski
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Leading professionals provide answers to frequently asked questions on distribution of independent films: markets, contracts, financial arrangements, self-distribution, promotion, and much more.

The AIVF Guide to Film and Video Distributors

By Kathryn Bowser
A co-publication of the Foundation for Independent Video and Film and the Association of independent Video and Filmakers
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Handy profiles of over 230 nonprofit and commercial distributors, fully indexed, with practical information on type of work handled, primary markets, relations with producers, marketing and promotion, foreign distribution, contacts and more.

Alternative Visions: Distributing Independent Media In a Home Video World

By Debra Franco
A co-publication of the American Film Institute and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film
$ 9.50 (AIVF and AFI members)
$12.95 (all others)

A report to the field on the current state of distribution for alternative films and tapes. What has happened to institutional market, and what promise does the home video market actually hold for non-mainstream work? Includes detailed case studies of the marketing of 8 independent works.

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by Renee Harmon
Walker and Company, $14.95
A book about the essential elements in the business end of filmmaking, including financial management, legal issues, marketing strategies, and distribution possibilities.

Cinematic Motion: A Workshop for Staging Scenes

by Steven D. Katz
Michael Weise Productions, $24.95
A collection of blocking strategies that covers a range of dramatic situations and camera styles for film directors of all levels.

The Handbook of Treatments

Edited by Michael Bashista
International Television Association, $18.95
The book contains 15 types of film treatments, illustrating the various approaches scriptwriters can take in creating a story "blueprint."

Reference Texts

The Mini-Encyclopedia of Public Domain Songs

Edited by Barbara Zimmerman
The BZ/Rights Stuff, Inc., $299
A comprehensive annotated list of 600 well-known songs now in public domain, from "Give My Regards to Broadway" to "Take Me Out to The Ballgame." Included is a guide to where to find the songs and information concerning the limits on their usage.

Freedom of the Press Throughout the World 1993 Report

by Reporters Sans Frontières
John Libbey and Company Ltd., $30
In 1993 at least 61 journalists in 21 countries died; another 123 were still in prison, one quarter in China. This report reviews the attacks on press freedom in 152 countries, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe.

Aid for Cinematographers and Audio Visual Production in Europe

by Jean-Noël Dibie
John Libbey and Company Ltd., $60
Commissioned by the Council of Europe, this book provides an analysis of the support mechanisms for film and television in 24 European countries, from direct aid to tax shelters. Also includes useful appendices listing professional associations, public and private channels, film commissions, and more.

The New Television in Europe

Edited by Alessandro Silj
John Libbey and Company Ltd., $130
In addition to essays on Europe's efforts towards a "television without frontiers," this book includes chapters and extensive data on television in Italy, the UK, Spain, France, Germany, Eastern Europe, and Scandinavia.

Domestic

ANN ARBOR FILM FESTIVAL, Mar. 15-20, MI. Now in 32nd yr., fest accepts entries in all cats & genres of ind. filmmaking: doc, animation, experimental, narrative. Awards of $7,000 in cash prizes: 8 named awards totaling $5,750 & $1,250 at award jury's discretion. 4 hours of films tour colleges & film showplaces across US for 4 mos. following fest; rental fee of $1/min per tour stop paid to participating filmmakers. Entry fee: $30. Format: 16mm; no video accepted for prescreening. Deadline: Feb. 15. Contact: Ann Arbor Film Festival, PO Box 8232, Ann Arbor, MI 48107; (313) 995-5356.

CAROLINA FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, Mar. 23-26, NC. Competitive fest "celebrates independent artistry" & is held on campus of Univ. of North Carolina. Cash prizes totalling $2,500. Previously unsubmitted works in all genres w/ running time 60 min. or less are eligible. This yr fest seeks works which highlight the contributions of women artists in film and video, to be presented in specially programmed shows but to compete within fest's regular competition. Last yr over 70 works were shown in competition. Entry fee: $15 students; $25 independents/professionals. Formats: 3/4", 1/2", 16mm. Deadline: Feb. 15. Contact: Michael Frierson, Broadcasting Cinema Division, 100 Carmichael Bldg., UNC-Greensboro, Greensboro, NC 27512-5001; (919) 334-5360.

NATIONAL EDUCATIONAL FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, May, CA. The address listed for this fest in the Oct. 1993 issue of *The Independent* was incorrect. The address should be: 655 13th St., Oakland, CA 94612. All other information remains the same.

NEW ENGLAND FILM AND VIDEO FESTIVAL, May 12-14, MA. Copresented by Arts Extension Service & Boston Film/Video Foundation. Ind. cat. open to New England residents only. Student cat. open to undergrad & grad students whose entries were completed while attending a New England college/university or who are New England residents attending college elsewhere. Works must have been completed since 1992. Media works of all lengths eligible; dramatic/narrative, doc, animation & experimental genres accepted. No more than 2 works/artist. Up to $6,000 in cash & services awarded in ind. & student cats, w/ separate award distinctions for film & video. Entry fee: $30 ind.; $20 student. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, S-8, all video formats. Deadline: Jan. 21 (ind.); Jan. 28 (students). Contact: Pam Korza, New England Film & Video Festival, Arts Extension Service, Division of Continuing Education, 604 Goodell Bldg., Univ. of MA, Amherst, MA 01003; (413) 545-2360.

NEW YORK LESBIAN AND GAY FILM FESTIVAL: THE NEW FESTIVAL, May 11-22, NY. Works of any length by & about lesbians & gay men accepted to fest, which welcomes work on multicultural & social issues & variety of different styles, incl. experimental film & video. Fest, founded in 1989, one of largest of its kind. Entry fee: $10 for return s&h. Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4", 1/2"; preview on VHS. Deadline: Dec. 15. Contact: Programming Committee, The New Festival, 462 Broadway, Ste. 510, NY, NY 10013; (212) 343-2707.

PHILADELPHIA FESTIVAL OF WORLD CINEMA, May 4-15, PA. Produced by International House, annual citywide, 12-day celebration features premiere screenings of int'l & American ind. prods, tributes, workshops, forums, parties & cine-cafés. Fest is noncompetitive & mostly curated. Special events incl. Festival of Independents (showcase of works by Philadelphia-based film/video makers) & "Set in Philadelphia" screenwriting competition (open to screenwriters who submit original, feature-length screenplays set in Greater Philadelphia metro area). Formats: 35mm, 16mm, 3/4"; preview on 3/4" & 1/2". Deadline: Jan. 11 (postmark). For film/video entry forms, send SASE to: Open Call, Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-6593; fax: 6562.

RETIREMENT RESEARCH FOUNDATION NATIONAL MEDIA AWARDS, May 25, IL. Competitive fest for outstanding films, video & TV series that address aging, capture images of older persons & illuminate challenge & promise of aging society. Entries must deal w/ concerns of aged or those working in field. Cats: ind. films, TV nonfiction, training & theatrical films. Awards: 1st Prize: $5,000, Owl statuette; 2nd Prize: $1,000, plaque; Honorable Mentions (2): $500, plaque; community video award in TV nonfiction cat. only: $2,000, Owl statuette; Special Achievement Award: $5,000, statuette. Entries must have been produced in US & released or initially televised/copyrighted during 1993. Formats: 3/4", 1/2", 16mm. Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: Ray Bradford, project director, Center for New Television, 1440 N. Dayton, Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 951-6868; fax: 5717.

SAN FRANCISCO INTERNATIONAL LESBIAN & GAY FILM FESTIVAL, June 9-19, CA. One of the largest international lesbian & gay media arts events, this fest had audiences last yr of over 51,000 people (incl. 200 int'l guests as well as large number of programmers & distributors) & featured 117 programs at 7 venues throughout San Francisco, incl. signature venue Castro Theatre. Fest is "committed to showcasing the best & most diverse work by or about lesbians and gay men." Fest especially encourages applications from women & people of color. Presented by Frameline, a nonprofit organization dedicated to exhibition, distribution, funding & promotion of lesbian & gay media arts. Deadline: Jan. 1 (no entry fee for early entrants), final appl. deadline: Feb. 28. Contact: Mark Finch, Frameline, San Francisco International Lesbian and Gay Film Festival, 346 Ninth St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 703-8650; fax: (415) 861-1404.

This month's festivals have been compiled by Kathryn Bowser, director of the FIVF Festival Bureau. Listings do not constitute an endorsement. Since some details change after the magazine goes to press, we recommend that you contact the festival for further information before sending prints or tapes. To improve our reliability and make this column more beneficial to independents, we encourage all filmand videomakers to contact the FIVF Festival Bureau with personal festival experiences, positive and negative.

Foreign

OBERHAUSEN INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL, Apr. 21-27, Germany. Celebrating 40th anniversary this yr, competitive fest showcases innovative ind. & experimental short & doc films of all genres under perennial theme "Way to the Neighbor." Social, doc, new developments in animation, experimental & short features, student films, first films & works from developing countries programmed. Entries must be German premieres produced after Jan. 1, 1992, w/ running time up to 35 min. & not submitted for selection in previous yrs. Anniversary fest will focus on fest's history (e.g., first films, work from fest archives). Int'l competition also accepts video. Awards: Grand Prize (10,000DM); 4 Principal Prizes (2,000DM); special prizes (1,000-5,000DM); Alexander Scotti Prize to best film on old age & death (2,000DM); Best Film on Educational Politics (5,000DM); Fipresci Prize (2,000DM); Interfilm Prize (2,000DM); DGB Prize (3,000DM). Fest also incl. Filmotheque of Youth & Children's Cinema, which awards prize of 3,000DM, decided by jury of children. Formats: 3/4", 1/2", 35mm, 16mm; preview on cassette. Deadline: Feb. 1. Contact: Angela Haardt, fest director, 40 Int'l Kurzfilmtage Oberhausen, PO Box 101505, D-46042 Oberhausen, Germany; tel: 49 208 807 008; fax: 49 208 852 591.

SYDNEY FILM FESTIVAL, June 10-25, Australia. Founded in 1954, FIAPF-recognized fest has become leading int'l showcase; it is also one of world's oldest fests. Noncompetitive int'l program mixes features, shorts, docs & retros. Selection of films from several countries. In 1993, fest showed 70 features & over 100 shorts & docs. Many selected films shared w/ Melbourne Film Festival, which runs almost concurrently. Australian distributors & TV buyers attend. Excellent opportunity for access to Australian markets; press coverage each yr. Fest conducts audience survey, w/ results provided to filmmakers. Entries must be Australian premieres, completed in previous yr. FIVF will again act as liaison w/ Sydney this yr, collecting & organizing films for prescreening by fest director Paul Byrnes, who will visit NY in Feb. Fest pays r/t group shipment of selected films from FIVF office. Entry fee: $25 AIVF members; $30 nonmembers, payable to FIVF. Fest formats: 70mm, 35mm, 16mm; preview on 1/2" or 3/4" only. Deadline at FIVF: Jan. 14. For info. & appls, send SASE or contact: Kathryn Bowser, FIVF, 625 Broadway, NY, NY 10012; (212) 473-3400. Deadline in Sydney: Mar. 31. Fest address: Paul Byrnes, fest director, Sydney Film Festival, Box 25, Glebe NSW 2037, Australia; tel: 61 2 660-3844; fax: 61 2 692-8793.

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FOR RENT: Prod. offices w/ reception, phones, Xerox, fax, also 3/4" off-line rooms at Lovett Productions. Soho townhouse overlooks gardens. Contact: (212) 242-8999.

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SONY 3-CHIP DXC-325 Hi-8 camera w/ EVV-9000 back & 2 x 1 Fuji lens. Also Sachtler mini tripod. Both come w/ traveling case. Used less than 100 hrs. $5,000. (212) 962-0105.

BUILDING FOR SALE: 2 floors, 5,500 sq. ft. w/ large open spaces & high ceilings. Top floor finished by artist for living/gallery; vehicle access & rentable shops below. Ideal for filmmaker, artist, sculptor. Brooklyn, near Pratt. $275K. (718) 638-2238.

16MM ANIMATION STAND rental in Queens, NY (Astoria). Special effects, multiplane photography & some rotoscoping capabilities. Low hourly rates, incl. operator. Business/Media Services (718) 545-1888.

AATON LTR 54 & 16mm camera packages for sale, incl. mattebox, batt, charger, accessories & Zeiss 10-100mm zoom lens. Excellent condition at excellent price: $13,000-$14,000. Call Bob at (212) 255-8868.

S-8 CAMERAS w/ or w/o sound from $79. 16mm Aricon Pro 600 w/ audio record deck $450. 16mm viewer $125. 16mm Bell & Howell projector $200. 8mm projector $100. 8mm viewer $75. Light meter $79. Wanted: 3/4" Umatic deck. George Cahill (215) 423 1800; fax: 1803.

EXPERT IN CAMERA & LENS REPAIR. Work on Arriflex, Cinema Products, Eclair, Aaton. Call Ralph (718) 284-0223.

FOR SALE: Bachler Video 20 $2,400. Sony MPX-290 edit-controlled audio board $1,800. Sony VO-880 3/4 fort w/ TC, batts & charger $2,000. We buy walkie talkies, any make, model, or condition. Electronic Visions (212) 691-0375.

PANASONIC 7750/7650s fully automated S-VHS A/B roll edit system w/ faces, dissolves & wipes, VITC, generate EDL, for rent: $480/mo., up to 6 mos. Will deliver & help install. Call Jack (212) 995-0760.

OXBERRY 35MM & 16MM RENTALS in Rochester, NY animation studio. Low commercial rates for ind. film projects. Fred Armstrong or Skip Battaglia (716) 244-6550.

ROSCO MODEL 1500 FOG & SMOKE MACHINE for rent. $55/day. Special weekly & monthly rates avail. Call Ralph (718) 284-0223.

Each entry in the Classifieds column has a 250-character limit & costs $25 per issue. Ads exceeding this length will be edited. Payment must be made at the time of submission. Anyone wishing to run a classified more than once must pay for each insertion & indicate the number of insertions on the submitted copy. Each classified must be typed, double-spaced & worded exactly as it should appear. Deadlines are the 8th of each mo., two mos prior to the cover date (e.g. January 8 for the March issue). Make check or money order—no cash, please—payable to FIVF, 625 Broadway, 9th fl., NY, NY 10012.

Distribution

ATA TRADING CORP., actively & successfully distributing ind. prods. for over 50 yrs, seeks programming of all types to present to world. Contact us at (212) 594-6460.

STONEPINE PRODUCTIONS seeks submissions of quality, full-length scripts. All genres considered. Contact: 10 Universal City Plaza, Ste. 1077A, Universal City, CA 91608-1097; (818) 505-3500.

TAPESTRY INTERNATIONAL, distributor of ind. programs, seeks new product for worldwide TV distribution. Contact Lincoln Richmond at Tapestry Int'l, 920 Broadway, NY, NY 10010; (212) 677-6007, fax: 473-8164. Enclose SASE for prompt return.

SEEKING NEW WORKS for educational & health care markets. Fanlight Prods. distributes films/videos in areas of health, sociology, psychology, etc. Karen McMillen, Fanlight Productions, 47 Halifax St., Boston, MA 02130; (617) 937-4113.

CS ASSOCIATES, w/ over 20 yrs experience, represents inds. in foreign & domestic TV & video markets. We seek new programs of all types. Send preview cassette to 102 E. Blithedale Ave., Mill Valley, CA 94941; (415) 383-6060.

SEEKING NEW WORKS for educational markets. Educational Productions distributes videos on early childhood education, special ed. & parent ed. Contact: Linda Freedman, Educational Prods, 7412 SW Beaverton Hillsdale Hwy, Portland, OR 97225; (800) 950-4949.

ALTERNATIVE FILMWORKS, experimental film distributor seeks ind. film/video works, any length. No mainstream films. Send videotape copy to: Alternative Filmworks, Dept. IC, 259 Oakwood Ave., State College, PA 16803-1698; (814) 867-1528; fax: 9488.

CHIP TAYLOR COMMUNICATIONS, the best distributor, is always seeking the best prods. Send yours on VHS & we'll notify you w/in 7 days. Contact: CTC, 15 Spollett Dr., Derry, NH 03038.

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AWARD WINNING DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: West coast, seeks hip projects. Has Ultra T superspeed lens package, lights & sound package for low budget prods. Call for reel; (310) 453-0078.

DP/STEADICAM ARTIST w/ 16SR, 35BL, superspeed lenses, 3-chip camera & BVU 150 deck sound equip., lighting, van. Passport. Certified scuba diver, French, a little Spanish. Features, commercials, music videos. Call (212) 929-7728.

SP SONY 3-CHIP BVP/70/BVV5 SP comb. tripod, lights, mics. Incl. my services as cameraman/technician & use of van. Corporate, industrial, doc: $550/day. Sony 3/4" off-line editing system for rent w/ delivery, setup. Tom (212) 279 7003.

ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY, frequent contributor to "Legal Brief" column in *The Independent* & other magazines, offers legal services to film/video community on development thru distribution. Reasonable rates. Contact Robert L. Seigel, Esq. (212) 545-9085.

EXPERIENCED RESEARCHER avail. for film, fact, copyright & photo searches at Library of Congress & other Washington D.C. archives. Resonable rates. Flexible for good causes. Katie (202) 483-7233.

CINEMATOGRAPHER looking for interesting projects. Credits incl.: *Metropolitan, The Night We Never Met & Barcelona*. John Thomas (201) 783-7360.

STEADICAM for film & video. Special rates for inds. Call Sergei Franklin. (212) 228-4254.

ENTERTAINMENT ATTORNEY. Legal advice, contract negotiating & drafting for film producers, directors & screenwriters. Know your legal rights & protect your artistic property. Kenneth P. Olsen (212) 941-6822.

EXPERIENCED DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ Arri 16 SR package & Mole Richardson lighting package. Seeks interesting film projects in feature or short subject form. Very reasonable rates for new directors & screenwriters. (212) 737-6815; fax: 423-1125.

NEED FINANCING FOR YOUR FILM? Need legal advice? Entertainment attorney/producer w/ estab. prod. & distribution company can help. Special rates. Free consultation. (212) 213-8511.

EXPERIENCED SENIOR SCRIPT CONSULTANT can doctor any script, market-ready for Hollywood. Also can edit, supervise, fix problem video programs. Producer/writer/editor for features, network & cable & published book author on films. (617) 354-7055.

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AMERICAN IN IRELAND. Experienced TV/film associate producer/ researcher/prod. manager living in Dublin can help you w/ your Ireland project. No job too big or small. Great recommendations avail. For resume´ & further info, call (718) 858-2912 in US.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY: Experienced cameraman avail. for ind. projects. 35mm & 16mm pkgs. Contact: David Temple (212) 924-7870.

SONY BVW-300A w/or w/o award-winning cameraman. 1-piece Beta/Beta SP unit: lightest, best resolution & sensitivity avail. Vinten tripod, DP/Chimera light kit, monitor, mics, wide lens. Flexible rates. Call Scott (212) 721-3668.

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CINEMATOGRAPHER looking for interesting projects. Owner of an Arri 16SR & other camera & lighting equipment. Call Ralph (718) 284-0223.

DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY w/ awards, talent & experience. Credits incl. features, commercials, industrials, docs, shorts & music videos. Owner of Aaton 16mm/super 16 package. 35mm package also avail. Call for my reel. Bob (212) 255-8868.

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FILM & TV JOBS: Nat'l listings. Professional, technical & prod. Published 2x/mo. 6 issues/$35, 12/$60, 22/$95. Send check/m.o.: *Entertainment Employment Journal*, Dept. 200, 7095 Hollywood Blvd. #815, Hollywood, CA 90028. (213) 969-8500.

FLAN DE COCO FILMS is young, ind. company interested in getting in touch w/ new screenwriters & their screenplays for possible prod. Please mail submissions to: Flan de Coco Films, Box 93032, Los Angeles, CA 90093.

SCREENPLAYS WANTED. New prod. company seeks "slice of life" material. Send scripts to: Rosco Productions, c/o Micalizio, 368 Naughton Ave., Staten Island, NY 10305.

GROW YOUR BUSINESS: Business Strategy Seminar offers 10-wk strategy & support groups for entrepreneurs. Small-business owners challenge you to focus your energy & expand your horizons. Immediate results. For info, call Katherine Crowley (212) 481-7075.

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can grab stills from video. Anne (212) 873-5857.

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BILL CRESTON MEDIA expanding to video editing, computer & photo service. Taking over for Adaptors, Inc. Low rates. VHS, 3/4", Interformat, S-8 film, SEG, Amiga, titling, sound. Grants/discounts avail. 727 6th Ave., NY, NY 10010; (212) 924-4893.

TOTAL S-8 SOUND film services. All S-8 prod., postprod., sync sound, mix, multitrack, single & double system sound editing, transfers, striping, stills, etc. Send SASE for rate sheet or call Bill Creston, 727 6th Ave., NY, NY 10010; (212) 924-4893.

EDITOR/OWNER of non-linear editing system will cut pix & sound. Creative editing or just system operator, non-linear editing at off-line rates. Special student discount. Call Stephan (212) 206-0008.

16MM CUTTING ROOMS: 8-plate & 6-plate fully equipped rooms, sound transfer facilities, 24-hr. access. Downtown, near all subways & Canal St. Reasonable rates. (212) 925-1500.

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Conferences ▪ Seminars

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE offers seminars & workshops thru Dec. 16 on topics such as writing for film & TV, getting grants, filmmaking, story analysis & acting. All classes taught by film & TV professionals & held on the AFI campus, 2021 N. Western Ave. in Los Angeles. For more info, call AFI Professional Seminars & Workshops at (213) 856-7690.

FILM ARTS FOUNDATION offers ongoing workshops & seminars covering a wide range of topics, from 16mm film & video prod. to fundraising, distribution, screen–writing, special effects & guest lectures. Technical workshops are small, hands-on; all taught by professionals in field. For info, contact: FAF, 346 Ninth St., 2nd fl., San Francisco, CA, 94103; (914) 552-8760.

HARVESTWORKS in Manhattan offers classes in subjects ranging from Audio/Video Synchronization to Introduction to Multimedia Production & Audio Preproduction. All classes (1-2 days) held at 596 Broadway, NY, NY. To register, call John McGeehan at (212) 431-1130.

REPLITECH INTERNATIONAL, 3-day conference & expo for duplicators & replicators of video & audio tape, optical discs & floppy disks, will be held on June 14-16, 1994 at the Santa Clara Convention Center in Santa Clara, CA. For more info, call Benita Roumanis, Knowledge Industry Publications, Inc. (914) 328-9157.

SHOWBIZ EXPO EAST, set for Jan. 6-8 at the Hilton in Manhattan, expects to host 225 exhibitors (including NBC Enterprises, Universal City Studio & Arriflex). Over 45 industry-driven panels covering film, corporate video, technology & theater & myriad special events. To attend or exhibit, call Live Time, Inc. (213) 668-1811.

VIDEO EXPO/IMAGE WORLD, expo & seminar program for video production, computer animation, graphics, multimedia, presentation, digital imaging & pre-press imaging professionals, held April 25-29 at ExpoCenter in Downtown Chicago & Sept. 19-23 in Jacob Javits Convention Center in NYC. For more info, call Janet Vargas, Knowledge Industry (914) 328-9157.

WORLD CONGRESS ON BIOMEDICAL COMMUNICATIONS, the first meeting to bring together professionals involved in medical & scientific photography, illustration, motion media, print & computer imaging, will be held in Orlando, FL June 18-23. Contact: World Congress Meeting Professional Conferences, 25 Mauchly, Ste. 305, Irvine, CA 92718; (714) 753-8680.

Films ▪ Tapes Wanted

ALIVE TV is now accepting submissions of new work for broadcast. Please watch program on PBS & submit work that seems appropriate. Contact producer Neil Seiling for more info at (612) 229-1358 or fax 1283.

ART ON FILM DATABASE wants to know: have you produced a film, video, or videodisc on the visual arts? Send info on your prod. to the Program for Art on Film Database, computer index to over 19,000 prods on the visual arts. We are interested in prods on all visual arts topics & would welcome information on prods about artists of color & multicultural art projects. Send info to: Art on Film Database, Program for Art on Film, 980 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10021; fax: (212) 628-8963.

BAD TWIN, NY-based prod./exhibition collective, seeks

Notices are listed free of charge. AIVF members receive first priority; others are included as space permits. *The Independent* reserves the right to edit for length. Deadlines for Notices will be respected. These are the 8th of the month, two months prior to cover date (e.g., January 8 for the March issue). Send to: Independent Notices, FIVF, 625 Broadway, NY, NY 10012.

films under 30 min. for ongoing programs in Europe & US. Alternative approaches to all genres & forms welcome. Must have finished 16mm prints avail. Submit VHS only for preview; incl. SASE for return. Contact: Bad Twin, Box 528, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276.

BRONXNET (Bronx Community Cable Programming Corporation), nonprofit organization controlling 4 access channels on Bronx Cable TV System, seeks works by ind. video & filmmakers for access airing. BRONXNET produces programs & facilitates & assists community in producing & cablecasting programs for, by & about the Bronx. Contact: Fred Weiss, program director, (718) 960-1180.

CAROUSEL, series for municipal cable channels 23 & 49 in Chicago, seeks films/videos for children 12 yrs & under, any length, any genre. Send w/ appropriate releases, list of credits & personal info to: Carousel, c/o Screen Magazine, 720 N. Wabash, Chicago, IL 60611. Tapes will be returned if accompanied by postage.

CATHODE CAFE seeks short video art interstitials to play between alternative music videos on Seattle's TCI/Viacom Channel 29, Sundays 9:30 p.m. Format: 3/4" preferred; 1/2" ok. Contact: Stan LePard, 2700 Aiki Ave. SW #305, Seattle, WA 98116; (206) 937-2353.

CENTRAL AMERICAN NEWS PROJECT seeks individuals to produce news & public affairs pieces for monthly access show on Central America. Contribute footage or contacts w/ people in CA w/ film or video equip. No payment. Contact: Carol Yourman, 362 Washington St., Cambridge, MA 02139; (617) 492-8719.

CENTRAL ARTS COLLECTIVE, member-directed gallery in Tucson, AZ, seeks alternative videos w/ social/political edge for month long show in Jan. Tapes should be under 27 min., but exceptions are possible. Successful show could lead to monthly series. Deadline: Dec. 29. Send VHS tape & SASE to: Vikki Dempsy, Central Arts Collective, Box 454, Tucson, AZ 85702; (602) 326-1827.

CINETECA DE CINE ACCION seeks film & video submissions by & about Latinos for regular screening series. Fees paid. Formats: 16mm, 3/4", 1/2", video. Contact: Cine Accion, 346 9th St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 553-8135.

CITY TV, progressive municipal cable access channel in Santa Monica, seeks works on seniors, disabled, children, Spanish-language & video art; any length. Broadcast exchanged for equip. access at state-of-the-art facility. Contact: Laura Greenfield, cable TV manager, City TV, 1685 Main St., Santa Monica, CA 90401; (213) 458-8590.

COALITION VS. PBS CENSORSHIP seeks high quality, award-winning docs for "Banned by PBS Film Festival," scheduled for early 1994 in major cities around country. Must have been rejected for nat'l PBS feed. Send VHS viewing cassette w/ program description, reason/proof of PBS rejection, length, formats avail. & filmmaker/distributor contact info to: Mark Mori, Box 291555, Los Angeles, CA 90029; (310) 288-6693.

DATABASE & DIRECTORY OF LATIN AMERICAN FILM & VIDEO organized by Int'l Media Resources Exchange seeks works by Latin American & US Latino ind. producers. To incl. work in this resource or for info., contact: Karen Ranucci, IMRE, 124 Washington Place, NY, NY 10014; (212) 463-0108.

DOWNTOWN COMMUNITY TV CENTER (DCTV) accepts 3/4" Beta & VHS tapes for open screenings & special series w/ focus on women, Middle East, gay/lesbian, Native American, labor & Asian art. Contact: Tanya Steele, DCTV, 87 Lafayette St., NY, NY 10013; (212) 941-1298.

DUTV-CABLE 54, nonprofit educational access channel operated by Drexel University in Philadelphia, is looking for works by ind. producers for broadcast. All genres & lengths considered. No payment; will return tapes. VHS, SVHS & 3/4" accepted. Contact: George McCollough or Maria Elena Mongelli, DUTV-Cable 54, 33rd & Chestnut Sts, Philadelphia, PA 19104.

THE E-TEAM, a children's TV show w/ environmental theme, seeks film or video footage & completed works that maintain an environmental, nature, or science theme. Fees paid for footage used on air. Contact: David Calderwood, producer, Euro-Pacific Productions, Inc., (908) 530-4451.

EN CAMINO, KRCB, seeks works of 30-60 min. in Spanish & English concerning the Latino community. Formats: 3/4", 16mm. Please contact: Luis Nong, Box 2638, Rohnert Park, CA 94928.

ESSENTIAL CINEMA GROUP continually accepts works for Ind. Short Cinema bimonthly film series. 16/35mm short films, 30 min. max. Seeking new experimental, narrative, doc & animation. Send preview tapes on VHS (NTSC, PAL) w/ return postage to: Pike Street Cinema, 118 Pike St., Seattle, WA 98101. For more info on ECG, write: 2011 Fifth Ave., #301, Seattle, WA 98121-2502 or (206) 441-6181.

FAMILY, INC. Investigations, explorations & personal expression of world's oldest institution needed for film & video exhibition at Artists' TV Access. Work by artists 18 & younger particularly encouraged & work that reinvents genres (experimental docs, media deconstructions, etc.). Deadline: Dec. 15. Send entries in VHS preview format, w/ SASE (video mailer) to: Family, Inc., c/o Artists' Televison Access, 992 Valencia St., San Francisco, CA 94110.

FEEDBACK, anthology cable access program of ind. produced work, is accepting work on 3/4", 1/2" or Hi8. Send tape & SASE to: N.A.M.E. Gallery, Attn. Video Commitee, 700 North Carpenter, Chicago, IL 60622; (312) 226-0671.

FEM TV (Feminist TV), award winning cable access show in Houston, seeks short videos by/about/for women

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FILMBABIES COLLECTIVE, highly aggressive co-op of NY-based writers & directors, seeks new members w/ finished feature-length screenplays for reading workshop &/or short films for our screening series (16mm, 15 min. or less). For submission guidelines, call (212) 875-7537 & leave name & address, or write to Film Babies Collective, Box 2100, NY, NY 10025.

FILM/VIDEO SHORTS (7-17 min.) wanted on various subjects for concept testing on nat'l TV. Submit 1/2" tapes for review to: Maureen Steinel, Ste. 4768, 30 Rockefeller Plaza, NY, NY 10112.

FILMS/VIDEOS WANTED. Shorts under 10 min. for Dyke TV, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-935 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

FULL HOUSE, night of movies. Monthly fest of short films to screen in universities & cafés from East Village to Burlington, Vermont (stops incl. Brooklyn, Albany & Saratoga). Films must be 16mm w/ optical sound. Preview of 16mm or VHS. Send $10 w/ entry & SASE to: Jack of Hearts Productions, Attn: Michael Ellenbogen, 42 N. Allen St., Albany, NY 12203; (518) 489-2037. Submitted films will also be considered for the first annual Full House Extravaganza in NYC April 1994.

INDEPENDENT MASSACHUSETTSMEDIA, screening series featuring Mass. ind. video/filmmakers, seeks entries. 6 hrs of programming will be selected w/ several 90-min. screenings to take place at ZONE Art Center in Springfield, MA, and Northampton Center for the Arts. Honorarium: $6/min. Deadline: Jan. 3. Massachusetts residents only. For guidelines, write: ZONE Art Center, 395 Dwight St., Springfield, MA 01103 (incl. SASE).

LATINO COLLABORATIVE bimonthly screening series seeks works by Latino film/videomakers. Honoraria paid. Send VHS preview tapes to: Latino Collaborative Bimonthly Screening Series, Euridece Arrati or Karim Ainouz, 280 Broadway, Ste. 412, New York, NY 10007.

LOS ANGELES CONTEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS (LACE) seeks recently completed video art, experimental docs & other innovative video work for ongoing screening program. Send 3/4" or 1/2" tape, description, resume & SASE to: Tom Dennison, Performance & Video Coordinator, LACE, 1804 Industrial St., Los Angeles, CA 90021; (213) 624-5650.

LA PLAZA, weekly half-hour doc series produced at WGBH Boston for & about the Latino community, is interested in acquiring original works by ind. film- & videomakers that deal w/ social & cultural issues concerning Latinos. Works between 25 & 28 min. strongly encouraged. Please send tapes in Beta, 3/4" or VHS format to: La Plaza/Aquisitions, WGBH, 125 Western Ave., Boston, MA 02134.

LOOKING FOR 30-min. docs or dramas about teen or child who leaves home due to problems w/ family or society. Should show kids & parents need each other & are willing to fight to stay together. Target group: 8-12 yrs. & parents. Will be American entry for int'l series of 8 programs to focus on UN's Int'l Year of the Family, 1994. Send written description of film (1-pg.) to Andrea Traubner, Thirteen/WNET, 356 W. 58th St., NY, NY 10019.

NEW AMERICAN MAKERS, nationally recognized venue for new works by emerging & under-recognized videomakers at the Center for the Arts in SF, seeks

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works that challenge boundaries of creative video/TV. Videomakers receive honorarium of $2/min. for tapes. Send VHS tape, $15 entry fee & SASE to: New American Makers, Box 460490, San Francisco, CA 94146.

NYTEX PRODUCTIONS seeks video interviews from across the US. Looking for political, entertainment & PSAs in super VHS or VHS. Send to NyTex Productions, Box 303, NY, NY 10101-0303, Attn: Don Cevaro.

OLD & NEW MASTERS OF SUPER-8, invitational fest in 5th yr at Anthology Film Archives, expanding its reference file of dedicated S-8 filmmakers w/ at least 2 completed films of any length in S-8, who have prints (not just originals) & wish to be considered for this yr's fest & other upcoming S-8 programming. Fest has travelled to Brussels & may reach Vienna, Berlin, Budapest, Tours, Paris, etc., in 1993-4. Send VHS preview transfer of S-8 films w/ SASE return mailer, self-addressed stamped postcard & $5 w/ file folder of support materials: 50-word bio, resumé, S-8 filmography, stills (labeled on back), photo of yourself (w/ name, address, phone), description of films (duration, fps, sound/silent, color/b&w, yr). Photo stills, etc. are for catalogs. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Barbara Rosenthal, guest curator, Old & New Masters of Super-8, 727 Ave. of the Americas, NY, NY 10010.

ORGONE CINEMA, newly formed group, looking for films/videos for possible exhibition in Pittsburgh area. Prefer VHS for preview. Especially interested in 8mm, S-8 & 16mm. Deadline: Ongoing. Send to: Orgone Cinema & Archive, c/o M. Johnson, 2238 Murray Ave., Pittsburgh, PA 15217.

PLANET CENTRAL TELEVISION seeks broadcast-quality films, videos & animation censored by US TV as too controversial or political. Bonus considerations for submissions that are smart, funny, sexy & exhibit an irreverent attitude. Send tape to: Dana Saunders, director of program acquisitions, Planet Central Television, 20178 Rockport Way, Malibu, CA 90265.

PRESCOTT COMMUNITY ACCESS CHANNEL requests non-commercial programs for local airing. No payment, but return by post guaranteed. Contact: Jeff Robertson, program coordinator, Channel 13, Box 885, Prescott, AZ; (602) 445-0909.

REEL TIME, monthly film series at Performance Space 122 in Manhattan, seeks short (under 45 min.) ind. films/videos. Submit VHS preview copy to: Caroline Koebel, c/o Reel Time, PS 122, 150 1st Ave, NY, NY 10000; (212) 477-5829 (x327).

SOUTHERN CIRCUIT 1994-95, tour of 6 artists who each travel 10 days to 8 southern sites & present 1 show/city, seeks film/video artists. No appl. form. Interested artists should submit VHS, 3/4" or 16mm film program approx. 1-hr (can be cued for 30-min. section for judging purposes) w/ resumé & publicity. Following prescreening process, artists selected from 40 finalists by panel in April '94. Demands of tour & variety of venues make performance art generally inappropriate. Deadline: Jan. 17. Send materials to: South Carolina Arts Commission, Media Arts Center, 1800 Gervais St., Columbia, SC 29201, Attn: Felicia Smith or Susan Leonard, South Carolina Arts Commission; (803) 734-8696.

SUPER CAMERA, production of Office KEI, an int'l TV company, seeks unique & never-before-seen footage. Areas include cutting edge of camera tech, footage that is dangerous to shoot, such as in volcanos or underwater, & events from both the natural & physical science worlds. Contact: Office KEI, 110 East 42nd St., Ste

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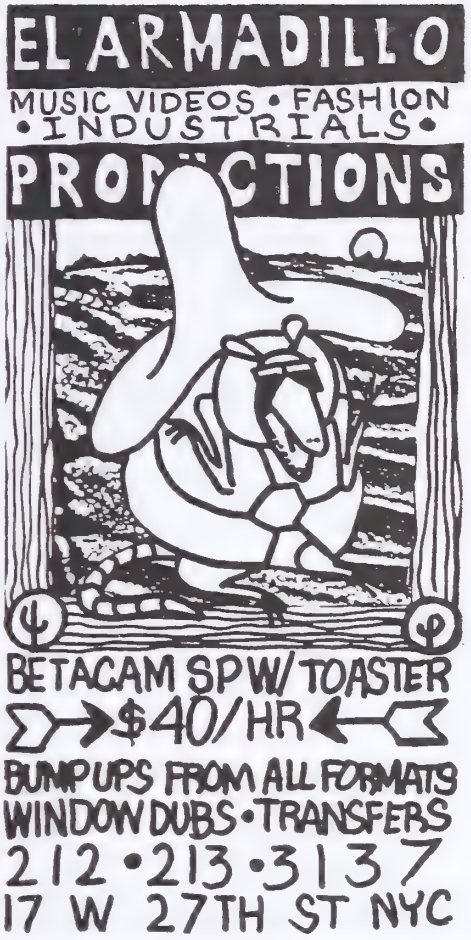
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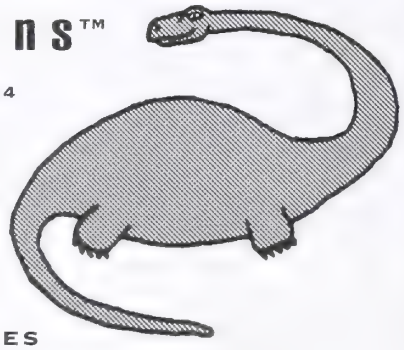
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THIRD EYE MEDIA GROUP seeks interviews for series of videos on labor & arts. First tape focuses on issues w/ in media arts community. Individuals who have worked to develop unions, spearheaded personnel policy reforms, etc. encouraged to respond. Resulting tape distributed free of charge to media arts orgs, serving as progressive organizing tool for workers to establish regulatory policies in areas of health benefits, contracts & other compensations. For info or to send confidential responses, contact: Third Eye Media Group, c/o Labor & the Arts, 103 Greene Ave., #2, Brooklyn, NY 11238; (718) 789-0633 (ph./fax).

TV 2000. TV pilot seeks new videos that convey positive images for teens. All genres (art, music & film on video). Send letter of permission to air materials & video to: Daryl Grant, Box 627, Ansonia Station, NY, NY 10023.

UNQUOTE TELEVISION, seen by 9 million people on 42 broadcast & cablecast stations nationwide last yr., seeks ind. doc, narrative, experimental, animation, performance films/videos & media art under 28 min. for insightful series. 1/2" & 3/4" dubs preferred. For more info contact: Unquote TV, c/o DUTV, 33rd & Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104; (215) 895-2927.

VIRTUAL FOCUS seeks submissions of doc, narrative & art videos for monthly public screenings. Send VHS copies to: Virtual Focus, 6019 Sunset Blvd., Ste. 133, Hollywood, CA 90028; (213) 250-8118.

WOMEN OF COLOR in Media Arts Database seeks submissions of films & videos for database that incl. video filmographies, bibliographical info & data. Contact: Dorothy Thigpen, Women Make Movies, 462 Broadway, 5th fl., NY, NY 10013.

WYOU-TV, cable access station in Madison, WI, seeks music-related videos for wkly alternative music show. Send 1/2" or 3/4" tapes. No payment; videos credited. Contact: WYOU-TV, 140 W. Gilman St., Madison, WI 53703.

Opportunities ▪ Gigs

MEDIA NETWORK, nationally recognized media arts center committed to development & use of alternative media for social change, is recruiting trainees for highly successful Seeing Though AIDS media literacy project that teaches health care workers how to use media in their AIDS education & counseling work. Trainees will work w/ cofacilitators to conduct Outreach to health facilities, identify appropriate media, prepare & participate in workshop facilitation. Contact: Ilana Navaro (212) 929-2663.

NEW YORK SETTLEMENT HOUSE seeks enterprising videomaker to produce a video on changing ethnic patterns of its neighborhood. Limited funds avail., artistic freedom. Please call Jeanette Pertz at (718) 783-4891.

SCHOOL OF THE ART INSTITUTE OF CHICAGO seeks artists w/ teaching & some admin. exp. for full-time, tenure-trk faculty positions in Filmmaking, Time Arts & Video. MFA or equiv. preferred. Filmmaking teaching load incl. basic 16mm prod & min. 1 of: optical printing, editing, sound for film, color, lighting or scriptwriting. Film history & contemp. theory helpful. Films by request only. Time Arts course contents incl. digital sound recording/editing & soundtrack recording/construction for film & video. Send tapes or film of work showing proficiency in combining sound & image. Video course

incl. basic prod, video strategies, graduate projects classes. Req. commitment to video as art medium, interest in experimental work, ability to integrate studio practice & theory. Send video portfolio w/ descriptions & reviews. Deadline: Jan. 28. All send resumes, teaching philosophy, 3 letters of recom. to: Jennifer Arra, Faculty Search, SAIC, 37 S. Wabash, Chicago, IL 60603.

VIDEO CAMERAWOMEN needed to work as stringers covering local events throughout US for *Dyke TV*, weekly NYC cable TV show. For info, call (212) 343-9335 or fax: (212) 343-9337.

Publications

BAY AREA BACKLOT, new floppy disk directory covering Northern California's motion picture, video, desktop video & multimedia industry has been released by *Film/Tape World*, Northern California's film & video news magazine. It will be avail. on floppy disk for easy access from Mac computers. For more info, call *Film Tape World* at (415) 543-6189.

CALIFORNIA NEWSREEL has published 32-pg. resource guide designed to help teachers use 7 African feature films recently released by California Newsreel in wide variety of college courses. Containing brief introductory essays on each film, teaching selections & select bibliographies, the expanded catalog enables colleges & public libraries to build in-depth video collections of African Cinema. For free copy & more info contact: California Newsreel, 149 Ninth St., San Francisco, CA 94103; (415) 621-6196.

GUIDELINES TO INTERNATIONAL PRODUCTION: Information on shooting overseas. Topics cover everything you need to know from pre- to post prod. Incl. chapters on int'l standards & formats, insurance, using foreign crew, int'l contacts & tips on how to keep out of jail. Written by David Calderwood, an experienced int'l producer, respected conference presenter & widely published author. Send $15 to: 52 Brady Rd, Shrewsbury, NJ 07702; (908) 530-4451.

NAMAC offers 1992 member directory, up-to-the-min. compilation of resource & contact info relevant to media arts, community, cultural & educational orgs & media-makers. Incl. descriptions of 132 media arts centers in US & Canada w/ org. history, mission, budget, collections, demographics of audiences & artists, facilities, publications, etc. Send check payable to NAMAC ($25 nonmembers/$12 NAMAC members) to: NAMAC, 1212 Broadway, Ste. 816, Oakland, CA 94612.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES 27th Annual Report is avail. Contains info on Endowment programs & complete listing of endowment grants. Report is free. Send requests to: NEH 1992 Annual Report, Rm. 407, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506.

1993 MOTION PICTURE ALMANAC provides info on exhibition, attendance & demographic stats, top-grossing films, theatre circuits, film commissions, press & trade publications, etc. Send $85, plus $5.50 s&h to Quigley Publications, 159 W. 53rd St., NY, NY 10019; (212) 247-3100. NY residents add 8.25 percent sales tax. All orders must be prepaid.

WHO FUNDS PTV? CPB pamphlet containing listings of public TV series, entities, & organizations that provide funding to ind. producers. To obtain a copy of the third edition, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to *Who*

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Resources ▪ Funds

AMERICAN FILM INSTITUTE administers for the National Endowment for the Arts program of grants for ind. media artists whose work shows exceptional promise & who have demonstrated a commitment to the art of the moving image. Highly competitive; limited grants. Previous recipients may not reapply. Grants range from $10,000 to $20,000. Appls. judged on basis of creativity of proposed project & artistic merit & technical quality of sample work. For info & deadline, contact: American Film Institute, Box 27999, 2021 N. Western Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90027; (213) 856-7600.

BANFF CENTRE FOR THE ARTS' TV & VIDEO RESIDENCIES: Call for proposals on "Memory/History," theme of summer/fall 1994 residencies. Participants engage in various aspects of TV & video practice & dialogue about theme & work. Unique prof. opp. to evolve scripts, studio & field prod. & postprod. practices & explore interface btwn concept & technology. Deadline: Jan. 1. For details & appl., contact: Office of the Registrar, The Banff Center, Box 1020, Station 28, 107 Tunnel Mountain Drive, Banff, AB, Canada, T0L 0C0; (403) 762-6180; fax: 6345.

CENTER FOR MEDIA, CULTURE & HISTORY at NYU announces Rockefeller humanities fellowships for scholars, mediamakers & activists who wish to address issues of representation, social change & the construction of identity embeddded in development of media worldwide. For the 1994/95 academic year, Center's theme is Local Knowledge in Global Village: Diaspora, Indigenous & Multicultural Media. Deadline: Jan. 15. For info & applications, contact: Center for Media, Culture & History, NYU, 25 Waverly Place, NY, NY 10003.

CHANGE, INC. assists artists of all disciplines w/emergency aid to avoid eviction or cover medical expenses, unpaid utility bills, fire damage or other emergencies. Grants range from $100 to $500. Send letter describing financial emergency, copies of bills or eviction notice, resumé, announcements of exhibitions, work sample & at least 2 letters of recommendation from field. For info, write: Change, Inc., Box 705, Cooper Station, NY, NY 10276; (212) 473-3742.

CREATIVE SCREENWRITERS GROUP, nat'l org. dedicated to advancement of writing, is launching free service for everyone interested in improving writing skills. CSG will provide assistance to anyone interested in joining writers' group in his/her community. CSG also provides info on how to form new groups. Send name, address & phone w/description of writing interests & SASE to: Creative Screenwriters Group, 518 Ninth St., NE, Ste. 308, Washington, DC 20002.

EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION CENTER accepting applications for presentation funds—partial support to organizations for the rentals of video, audio & time-based computer work & for artists' fees for screenings—as well as for finishing funds—$500 grants for media artists to complete their work. Applications accepted at any time & are reviewed at the end of each month. For applications & guidelines, call Sherry Miller Hocking at (607) 687-4341.

EXPERIMENTAL TELEVISION CENTER ARTISTS IN RESIDENCY PROGRAM is accepting applications from artists interested in studying techniques of video image

processing during an intensive 5 day residency. Artists must have prior experience in video production & must include resume & project description indicating how image processing is integrated in their work. For more info, contact Ralph Hocking at (607) 687-4341.

NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE HUMANITIES (NEH) offers study grants for humanities teachers w/ heavy teaching loads & limited opportunities for professional development. The $3,000 grants provide 6 wks of support during the summer 1994 undertake f/t humanities study. For appl. or guidelines, contact: NEH Study Grants, Rm. 316, 1100 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20506; (202) 606-8463.

NEW VISIONS, NEW VOICES, competition sponsored by Voyager Company, seeks creative works in any digital format for MacIntosh & Windows personal computers. Ind. panel of judges will evaluate works of fiction, nonfiction for adults & children. Competition encourages entries of any length & on any subject. $5,000 cash prize. Deadline: Feb. 1. For info & entry form, contact: New Visions, New Voices, The Voyager Company, 578 Broadway, Ste. 460, New York, NY 10027; (212) 431-5199.

PHILADELPHIA STORIES screenwriting competition is accepting submissions nationally for original feature length screenplays set primarily in the greater Philadelphia metro area. All genres accepted; scripts judged on quality & extent they tell a genuine Philadelphia story. Awards: $3,000, festival passes, story notes, meeting w/ industry professional. Postmark deadline: Jan. 21. Entry fee: $20. Winner announced May 1994 during 3rd Annual Philadelphia Festival of World Cinema. Submissions not accepted w/o completed application form. For guidelines, send SASE to: PFWC/ Screenwritng Competition, International House, 3701 Chestnut St., Philadelphia, PA 19104.

POLLOCK-KRASNER FOUNDATION gives financial assistance to artists of recognizable merit & financial need working as mixed media or installation artists. Grants awarded throughout yr, $1,000-$30,000. For guidelines, write: Pollock-Krasner Foundation, 725 Park Ave., NY, NY 10021.

UCROSS FOUNDATION offers artists 2- to 8-wk. residencies at foot of Big Horn Mts in Wyoming. Appls welcome from artists in all disciplines (visual, literary, film/video, music, scholarly). Deadline: March 1 for August-December session. Room, board & studio space provided free of charge. For appl., contact: Executive director, Ucross Foundation, 2836 US Hwy 1416 East, Clearmont, Wyoming 82835; (307) 737-2291.

WRITERS WORKSHOP, nonprofit org. dedicated to discovery & development of screenwriters, accepting submissions for WW Special Event, monthly reading by WW Actors Repertory Co. of screenwriters work before a live audience, w/ prominent film/TV professionals serving as moderators to critique screenplay. Past moderators have included Oliver Stone & Ray Bradbury. For more info, call (213) 933-9232 or send SASE to Writers Workshop, Box 69799, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

WRITERS WORKSHOP ETHNIC MINORITY CONTEST is accepting submissions for annual screenwriting contest for ethnic minorites from across U.S. Deadline: Dec. 17. Awards ceremony will be held in West Hollywood in April to honor 5 winners who will each receive $500 scholarships plus promotion (incl. exposure to agents, studios, producers & directors). Entry fee: $25. For info, call (213) 933-9232 or send SASE to: Writers Workshop Ethnic Minority Contest, Box 69799, LA, CA 90069.

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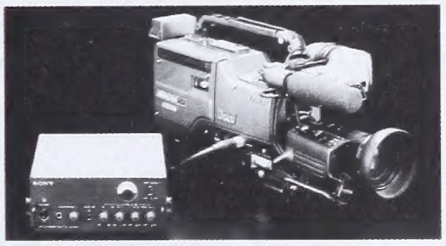
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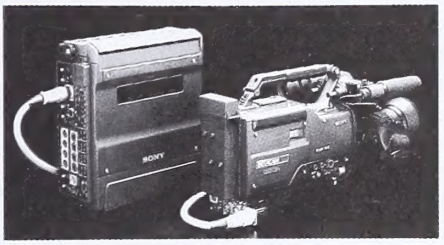


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MINUTES FROM THE AIVF/ FIVF BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING

The board of directors of the Association for Independent Video and Filmmakers (AIVF) and the Foundation for Independent Video and Film (FIVF) met in New York City on October 3. In attendance were: Robert Richter (president), Bart Weiss (secretary); Loni Ding (vice president), Joan Braderman, Jim Klein (treasurer), Barbara Hammer, Robb Moss, Bienvenida Matias, and Ruby Lerner (ex officio). Absent were Debra Zimmerman (chair), Dai Sil Kim-Gibson, Wilder Knight, Norman Wang (FIVF), and Eugene Alenikoff (FIVF).

A financial report compiled by Ruby Lerner and Susan Kennedy, AIVF's development director, was distributed and discussed.

A second discussion revolved around revising some of the current titles published by AIVF, including *The Next Step* and *The Distributors Guide*. Lerner reported that book sales, particularly sales of the *AIVF Guide to International Film and Video Festivals*, are up.

The board raised the issue of renting the space abandoned by Film News Now at 625 Broadway. Options such as short-term leases and renting the space on a daily basis for either audition or rehearsal space were discussed, as well as utilizing the space for future AIVF workshops until it is rented. The organization's lease expires in December 1994.

The roles and responsibilities of board members were discussed. It was suggested that board members write job descriptions of their duties. Ding suggested a package be made for new board members, which would include a job description, the organization's three-year plan, and minutes from past board meetings. It was also suggested that a description of duties be printed in *The Independent* prior to elections.

Ruby Lerner, executive director of AIVF, gave a report on the organization's membership efforts. She said an additional staff member will be brought on board to deal with membership issues, such as recruitment, evaluation and enhancement of member benefits, and speeding up the processing of new members and renewals. Each board member agreed to sign on at least five new members per year. The "Bring a Friend" plan, which would enable current members to renew at reduced rates if they encourage friends to join, was introduced as another possibility. Student discounts were also discussed. It was suggested that a student representative be chosen for the board.

Weiss suggested that AIVF attempt to get manufacturers' discounts on videotape as well on film stock.

On the advocacy front, Lerner announced the hiring of Martha Wallner to deal specifically with advocacy issues. She added the cancellation of *Independent Focus* on WNET was being addressed by a committee of concerned AIVF members in conjunction with members of Media Alliance.

Pat Thomson, editor of *The Independent*, gave a report on the magazine's status. Changes at the magazine include a new printer and mailhouse. The magazine's new design and glossy cover will be introduced in January. With this issue, display ad rates will increase approximately seven percent, the first increase in two years.

In other matters, Weiss nominated Jim Klein as board treasurer. A media consortium was discussed that would include AIVF, National Association of Media Arts and Culture (NAMAC), and the Alliance for Community Media (ACM). Representatives to the governing council were named: Lerner, Richter, and Wallner. Richter moved that former AIVF board members Dee Davis and James Schamus be appointed to the FIVF board.

The next board meeting will be held in New York on January 15 and 16.

AIVF ANNOUNCES NEW STAFF MEMBERS

AIVF has recently brought four new staff members on board. The staffers will work to strengthen two of the organization's most critical areas: advocacy and membership.

At a time when independent mediamakers need a strong, united voice to deal with a variety of issues, AIVF has hired Martha Wallner to act as an advocacy coordinator for the organization. In the past, Martha has a done a great deal of advocacy and outreach work for public access cable and has worked to raise public awareness of the media. She cofounded and served as a national coordinator for Deep Dish TV, and has served as both an adjunct professor at Ramapo College in New Jersey and an artist-in-residence at the School of the Art Institute in Chicago. Wallner has also produced videos projects that have been exhibited around the world. In addition, she was the 1993 recipient of an Intercultural Film/Video Fellowship from the Rockefeller Foundation.

AIVF's membership department has two new workers in place. Pamela Calvert was recently named membership/program director, while Judah Friedlander, formerly the organization's receptionist, was promoted to membership associate this summer. Before joining AIVF, Pamela served as program director for the John Drew Theater of Guild Hall, general manager for Dancing in the Streets, and director of services for Dance Theater Workshop in New York City. She is currently working with filmmaker Mirra Bank on the docudrama *Nobody's Girls*.

Last but not least, AIVF has a new receptionist, Arsenio Assin, a film student at City College in New York. The organization welcomes all its new staffers!

THE INDEPENDENT

In the next issue

A Special Report: Interactive Media

Kicking off AIVF's 20th anniversary year, *The Independent* will look at the new technologies that will affect the way independents produce, market, and distribute their work. Find out about:

- Narrative structure and nonlinear media: How does one write it?
- What's on the Internet for film/videomakers, and how to get there.
- The new cable & telco systems: Just how interactive are they?
- Ten views of the information superhighway and what it may mean for independents.

With the new year comes a new look: a redesign and glossy cover. Stay tuned!

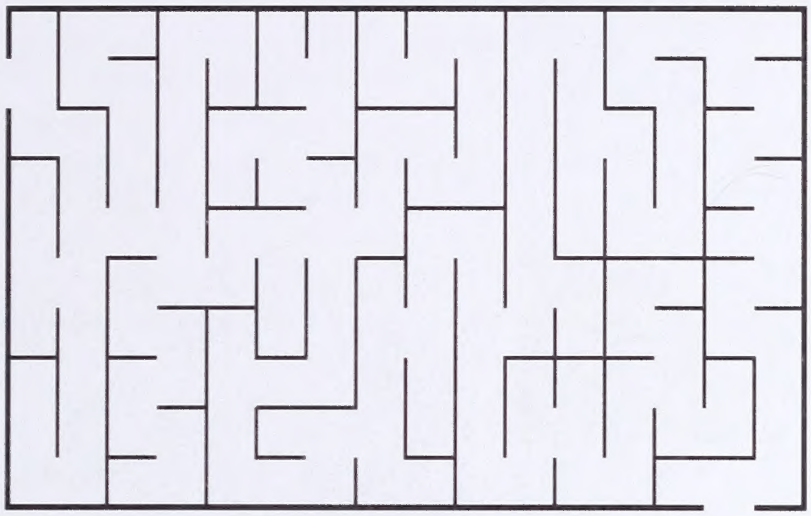
Late News Flash!
AIVF Holiday Party



Tuesday, December 7
7-9 pm
Location t.b.a.
Call 473-3400 for update.

Come celebrate with us! Meet the AIVF staff and your fellow members, preview the redesigned *Independent*, and hear about some of the exciting programs we're planning for next year, our 20th anniversary!

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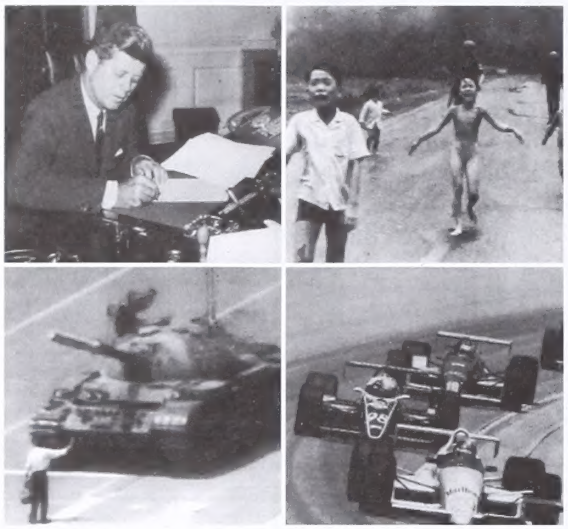
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